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The SAVIOUR's *Cautions and Argument againſt Covetouſneſs, in* Luke xii. 15. *opened and applied:*

IN TWO

SERMONS.

WITH

The Bleſſing and Recompence of the Charitable, from *Luke* xiv. 14.

A

FUNERAL SERMON

FOR

Mr. *Thomas Man* Senr.

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The Saviour's Cautions *and* Argument *offered againſt Covetouſneſs.*

LUKE XII. 15.

And he ſaid unto them, Take heed and beware of covetouſneſs, for a man's life conſiſteth not in the abundance of the things which he poſſeſſeth.

THE occaſion of theſe words was briefly this: When our Lord had been ſpeaking to the people, in ſuch a way as to manifeſt himſelf a teacher ſent from God, one of the vaſt multitude that heard him, either ſuppoſing him to be a divine perſon, or one of that authority, that his words would have a great influence and ſway with him, deſires him to ſpeak to his brother, that he would divide the inheritance with him. Our Lord puts him off with a ſhort anſwer; *Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you?* ſignifying that he came for other ends, than to be a ſecular judge, or umpire of differences in civil matters betwixt man and man,

Serm. I. and that it was very impertinent in itſelf, and a very ill improvement of the convictions he was now under of the excellency of his perſon and of his doctrine, to propoſe it to him to concern himſelf in ſo mean and trivial a matter, as that of dividing a temporal inheritance betwixt him and his brother; when, with the loſs of all temporal things, and even life itſelf, he had but juſt now been teaching them, that they muſt gain ſpiritual bleſſings and the eternal inheritance. But as this was an indication, a very plain and evident diſcovery of the carnal temper that took place in this perſon, and eſpecially of the prevalence of that particular luſt of the fleſh, covetouſneſs; our Lord, from hence, takes occaſion to warn the numerous company that were now his auditory, againſt this ſin in the words of my text.

Before I ſpeak to them directly, you may take this obſervation from what you have now heard of the occaſion of them: that

Carnal and covetous hearts will abuſe and proſtitute the moſt ſpiritual ordinances and privileges, to ſerve their carnal and covetous purpoſes.

There's nothing ſo holy and excellent, but a carnal and covetous heart would endeavour to ſerve the corruption, the carnality and covetouſneſs that prevails and reigns in it thereby. So *Eliſha*'s ſervant improv'd the miraculous cure that was wrought on *Naaman* the *Syrian* with a lye, to gain a talent of ſilver and a change of rayment; but as he gain'd more than he ſought for one way, two talents of ſilver and two changes of rayment, ſo he did another; for he got *Naaman*'s leproſy, as an heritage to himſelf and his poſterity. You may ſee the hiſtory, 2*King.* v. So *Balaam* improv'd the gift of prophecy to ſerve the carnality and covetouſneſs of his heart, in deſiring worldly
Luk. xii. 1. advantages and preferments: and as the Phariſees did, whoſe leaven of hypocriſy, againſt which our Lord cautions his diſciples, was ſpirited by their covetouſneſs, and wrought by it; ſo there are many go in his way, as the apoſtle tells us of thoſe falſe teachers, who privily ſhould bring in damnable hereſies, even denying the Lord that bought them, whoſe pernicious ways many ſhould follow, by reaſon of whom the way of truth ſhould be evil-
2 Pet. ii. 1, 2, 3. ſpoken of: *Thro covetouſneſs ſhall they with feigned words make merchandiſe of you*; and afterward, *An heart they have exerciſed with covetous practices, curſed children, who have forſaken the right way, and are gone aſtray, following the way of* Balaam
Ver. 14, 15. *the ſon of* Boſor, *who loved the wages of unrighteouſneſs*. So the apoſtle *Jude*, ſpeaking of thoſe deceivers that ſhew'd themſelves ſuch, by *turning the grace of our God into laſciv-*

ouſneſs,

neſs, and denying the only Lord God and our Lord Jeſus Chriſt: Woe unto them, ſays he, *for, they have gone in the way of* Cain, *and ran greedily after the error of* Balaam *for reward, and periſhed in the gainſaying of* Core. Serm. I. Jude v. 4. Ver. 11.

Thus, in the caſe before us, we find a vile, carnal, covetous heart proſtituting the greateſt privilege, communion in the preaching of the bleſſed Jeſus, to ſerve the purpoſes of its carnality and covetouſneſs. Inſtead of this perſon's endeavouring to receive our Lord's life-ſpeaking and lifegiving words, and ſo to improve them and comply with the tenor and teaching of them as to gain life thereby; inſtead of applying to him for knowledge and grace to this purpoſe, that he might ſo make his intereſt for eternity, he has no other buſineſs with our Saviour than this: *Maſter, ſpeak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me.* A goodly price, at which our Lord was valued by him! a goodly office he would employ him about! quite different from what he was ſent for and employ'd in by his holy father, with ſo great deſign of the advantage of mankind, in ſo much compaſſion to their miſeries and neceſſities, their greateſt miſeries and their utmoſt neceſſities. But ſuch is the blindneſs of a carnal mind, and ſuch is the hardneſs and wretchedneſs of an heart exerciſed in covetous practices; they, in whom theſe prevail, would even bring a holy Saviour to be a partner in their guilt, to be a pandar to their luſts, and a procurer to gratify their vicious, moſt corrupt, and idolatrous inclinations and deſires. This example ſhould move our caution and carefulneſs to comply with the advice given upon this occaſion in the words of my text; *Take heed and beware of covetouſneſs, for a man's life conſiſteth not in the abundance of the things which he poſſeſſeth.* Ver. 13.

In which we may take notice of,

Firſt, A ſin mentioned and guarded againſt, *covetouſneſs.*

Secondly, A double guard ſet againſt it, *Take heed, and beware of it.*

Thirdly, A powerful argument whereby to keep ourſelves from it; *For a man's life conſiſteth not in the abundance of the things which he poſſeſſeth.*

In ſpeaking to the words, I would ſhew you,

I. What is the nature of the ſin of covetouſneſs here taxed.

II. The reaſon why a double guard is ſet againſt it by our Saviour.

III. Open

Serm. I. III. Open the force of the argument our Lord here offers to keep us from it.

IV. Make application of the whole.

I. As to the nature of the ſin of covetouſneſs here taxed, the word that is here and in divers places of the New Teſtament uſed to ſignify it, πλεονεξία, imports a *deſire* or *craving to have more*; and that *more* may be referr'd to either more *than we have*, or more *than is meet*, or more *than is needful*, or more *than God allows or ſees fit we ſhould have*, or more *than would do us good*. So that,

1. The general nature of covetouſneſs we may properly account for, or deſcribe thus: That *it is a deſire of having more*, a craving to have more, a thirſt, an unreaſonable, unreſtrained and inſatiable thirſt after more.

Whatever the perſon's circumſtances are, whatever he has, more or leſs, in whom covetouſneſs prevails, his covetouſneſs prevailing in him, ſtill urges him to deſire more; it works in him, and diſcovers its working in him by moving a deſire, an eager, unreaſonable, and unreſtrain'd deſire of having more. The language of covetouſneſs is ſtill, Let a man have what he will, I muſt have more, or I earneſtly deſire to have more.

Not that thoſe that are covetous do always deſire ſo much, or ſo unreaſonably and unlimitedly at firſt, as they do afterwards, or that all do ever ſo much exceed in their deſires as ſome do: for this is a ſtealing diſtemper, it comes gradually upon perſons, but grows commonly as it goes on; and this, of all diſtempers that the ſoul of man has belonging to it, does moſt ſenſibly and obſervably grow with years and time. Yea, when other luſts loſe their ſtrength, other deſires fail; (as when perſons are advanc'd in years, and make their nearer approaches to the end of time, and this world and worldly enjoyments, yet) this deſire is obſerv'd to grow, and to gather ſtrength then; which may ſhew us, beyond all contradiction, that it is an unreaſonable, unreſtrained, inſatiable deſire. As it's ſaid of the covetous perſon, *He enlargeth his deſire as hell, and is as death that cannot be ſatisfy'd:* as this deſire is inſatiable as hell and death, ſo it is of that nature, that nothing but theſe can put a ſtop to it, if grace do not: and the nearer perſons come to Death and the grave, the more ground covetouſneſs gets. The elder perſons are, commonly, the more covetous; thoſe that have one foot in the grave, are very commonly found to be with both hands greedily reaching after the world, and graſping tenaciouſly its advantages: they are even to the laſt, when they are juſt going to leave all, and to give account

Hab. ii. 5.

account for all to the great God; yet, as we ſay, *for getting* Serm. I.
what they can, and keeping what they have.

Another account of its general nature, is, that it is a deſire of having *more of theſe worldly things*, the gain, the grandeur, the wealth or dominion of this World. This we are to take notice of; for there is a covetouſneſs that is lawful and commendable, as well as there is that which is unlawful and condemnable. The apoſtle allows and directs us, not only to covet, but to *covet earneſtly* 1 Cor. xii. *the beſt gifts.* We may, and we muſt covet earneſtly after 31.
ſpiritual gifts, experiences, attainments; we muſt covet earneſtly the *true riches.* But the covetouſneſs here taxed is that of worldly things; worldly gain, wealth, riches, power or dominion. It was for coveting this laſt, that the king of *Babylon* is charg'd as a covetous perſon in the place now nam'd, and there is woe pronounc'd upon thoſe Hab. ii. 5.
that were for adding *houſe to houſe, and field to field, till there was no place, and that they might dwell alone in the* Iſa. v. 8.
earth.

It is alſo a coveting or deſiring *to exceſs*, theſe worldly things we have now mention'd. We have need of worldly things in ſome degree, ſo that all deſire after them is not culpable or to be condemned: as ſhall farther be ſhown, God willing. A moderate deſire after them is very lawful, but a covetous deſire exceeds bounds and meaſure, and is not reſtrained by what ſhould or ought to reſtrain or give bounds thereto. 'Tis not deſiring what we need, or as we need, what is ſuitable, or as it is ſuitable for us, but what a wild imagination and unbounded luſt prompt, and as they direct, and prompt and put us forward; not only not reſpecting the rules of divine wiſdom that ſhould govern us herein, but even caſting contempt upon them, and caſting them behind our backs. And this will lead us

2. To be more particular: And as you were told that this deſiring or craving more may be referr'd to more *than we have*, or more *than is meet*, or more *than is needful*, or more *than God allows* or *ſees fit we ſhould have*, or more *than would do us good*; theſe things wherein the eſſence of covetouſneſs lies, we ſhall more particularly conſider.

1.) then, Covetouſneſs lies in deſiring more *than we have*, it is much ſeen in this. *Let your converſation*, ſays the Heb. xiii. 5.
apoſtle, *be without covetouſneſs, and be content with ſuch things as ye have.* Not that all deſire after more than we have is covetouſneſs, or inconſiſtent with true contentedneſs. He may well be content with his own condition, and with the things the providence of God has ſeen fit to put him in poſſeſſion of, who yet may reaſonably deſire

ſome

Serm. I. ſome things that are beyond his preſent circumſtances; and God allows all perſons to deſire things that are convenient and moderately comfortable, ſo they do it in a reaſonable manner, and have their deſire herein govern'd by the rules he has preſcrib'd, and ſubjected to his will, as to the iſſue, of which more anon. But as the nature of covetouſneſs is to deſire to have more, ſo it is to have eager and ungovern'd deſires this way; and when there ſhall be that eagerneſs and earneſtneſs of deſire after more, as ſhall not only ſerve to put us upon the exerciſe of that diligence in a lawful way to advance our circumſtances, which God hath commanded and will countenance, but ſhall make us utterly unreconcil'd to our preſent circumſtances, uneaſy under them, altogether diſcontented with them, unthankful for the comforts they afford us, and dead to the enjoyment they may give and yield us, or ſhall put us upon the uſe of unlawful means to get them alter'd: when we ſhall have ſuch deſires in us to gain more than we have, as ſhall diſtract our minds, cauſe us to be *of doubtful mind*, unfit us for God's ſervice or enjoyment, and render us diſtruſtful of his care and goodneſs to provide for us things convenient and ſuitable, (we being found in the way of our duty waiting on him, and uſing other proper means of obtaining them) this is covetouſneſs.

2.) Covetouſneſs lies and is ſeen in our deſiring more *than is meet* of the things of this world. When *food convenient*, which *Agur* wiſely pray'd for, will not content us; but we muſt, we *will be rich*, notwithſtanding the temptations and the ſnares we are told this will and reſolution brings perſons into, when we will *make haſte to be rich*, tho at the expence of piety and innocence, as we are told, *He that maketh haſte to be rich, ſhall not be innocent*: theſe things do manifeſtly diſcover a covetous temper, and muſt be the ſigns, the certain and infallible ſigns of covetouſneſs.

1 Tim. vi. 9.

Prov. xxviii. 20.

As that muſt be yet more diſcover'd, when there ſhall be no content with riches, either in any low or even conſiderable degree; but there is a deſire ſtill prevailing in perſons after abundance, and there ſhall be no bounds ſet to the abundance of riches and worldly increaſe; ſuch deſire after more than is meet of theſe worldly things, is certainly a covetous deſire, it is real and manifeſt covetouſneſs.

3.) Covetouſneſs lies and is ſeen in perſons deſiring more *than is needful*. What is needful, we may deſire lawfully; but what goes beyond this, I fear will amount to no leſs than a covetous deſiring.

We

Serm. I.

We may deſire food and rayment, moderate ſupplies for ourſelves and thoſe that do belong to us; we may reaſonably deſire the neceſſaries of life for ourſelves and ours, that we may have what is neceſſary for the uſes and ſervices of life, what is neceſſary for the body, for the bodily life and outward eſtate, as to ourſelves, and thoſe that depend upon us: our heavenly Father knows that we need theſe things, and he allows us to deſire them of him, and to be ſeeking them in proper ways.

Farther, we may not only deſire what is neceſſary to ſupport life, but to ſupport and maintain alſo the moderate comforts of life to ourſelves, and to thoſe that do belong to us; this is but to deſire for our neceſſity, and therefore cannot be eſteemed a covetous deſire, while the deſire itſelf is kept within due bounds, and is not too eager and violent. And as there is a twofold neceſſity we may have belonging to us, what is neceſſary for us may come under a twofold conſideration; what is *neceſſary for our life*, or what is *neceſſary for our ſtate*, the condition and place God hath ſet us in in the world: ſo it is unqueſtionable that we may lawfully, and without the juſt imputation of covetouſneſs, deſire what is neceſſary for our ſtate and condition, for ſupporting the character, and circumſtances, and place we are put into in the world by his providence, that we, and thoſe that belong to us, may live creditably, may be ſupported and ſupplied, and have for our uſe and enjoyment according to the place and circumſtances we are in; that we may with ſuitable advantage, encouragement and comfort, do the duty of our places, and live as is ſuitable for perſons of our character and circumſtances. What is neceſſary either of theſe ways we may deſire, and our deſire be very lawful; but an unreaſonable deſiring beyond theſe limits, more than is neceſſary to theſe purpoſes for ourſelves and ours, when we ſhall, not being content with proviſion for the moderate ſupply and comfort of ourſelves and families, be deſiring ſuperfluities, food for the luſt of ourſelves and ours, may be juſtly ſuſpected and taxed as covetouſneſs. And this deſire, if we would have it lawful, muſt ſtill be governed; for if God ſee fit to remove us from a higher to a lower ſtate and condition, or to ſtraiten us in the circumſtances we are in, we muſt ſtill be ſubmiſſive and content. And therefore,

4.) Covetouſneſs lies and is ſeen in our deſiring more *than God allows or ſees fit we ſhould have.* After all we have done and can do, we are entire dependants upon God, and 'tis his providence that has the diſpoſal of our circumſtances. *Promotion comes not from the eaſt or from the weſt,* Pſ. lxxv. 6, 7.

from

Serm. I. *from the north or from the ſouth; but God is judge, he* (as an act of providence and judgment) *liſts up one, and caſts down another.* And when perſons have acted a prudent part, taken a reaſonable care, and uſed a proper diligence to ſecure their worldly intereſt; when there has been, and is no want of prudence and diligence on their part to make mens circumſtances better than they are, if they are, after all, other than they would have them, they are to look upon this as owing to the diſpoſal of an infinitely wiſe providence, that for holy and great ends, diſtinguiſhes the circumſtances of men at pleaſure, chuſes that one ſhould be in higher and more plentiful, and another in lower and ſtraiter circumſtances; 'tis to be looked upon that they are in the ſtate that God ſees fitting ſhould be theirs, that this is the condition he has aſſign'd them, and ſees meet they ſhould be in at preſent, and for the time that he ſees fit: 'tis their duty to be therewith content. And for perſons in this caſe not to be content with God's allowance, and with the condition they are appointed to, and have allotted them by his providence; but to be ſtill uneaſy, anxious and aſpiring in their deſires after an higher place and condition, greater, more advanced and enlarged circumſtances than what God ſees fitting they ſhould be raiſed to: this argues an unſuitable frame of ſpirit, and a covetous deſire prevailing in them.

That men ſhould be uſing a prudent care and induſtrious diligence, when they are in lower, ſtraiter, and more uneaſy circumſtances, by proper means to raiſe themſelves, and to make their condition more proſperous, eaſy and comfortable, is what all muſt allow; for the *diligent hand maketh rich*, and prudence and diligence in the uſe of means both temporal and ſpiritual, are what God allows, and is pleaſed to own this way, and to bleſs and proſper to this end: this has been already granted and accounted for; but when theſe have been uſed, and are uſed, and yet do not anſwer or reach this end, but God ſees fit it ſhould be otherwiſe, and that perſons, notwithſtanding ſhould be in a lower condition; for them to be uneaſy and diſcontented with their preſent circumſtances, and ſtill reſtleſsly deſiring thoſe that are ſuperior, this is a covetous deſire, 'tis covetouſneſs.

5.) Covetouſneſs lies and is ſeen in perſons deſiring more of this world *than would do them good.* God knows what is beſt for every one, what meaſure of this world and theſe worldly things would do them good; and there is no more of the world deſirable by any, than what

what would have this effect, than what would really do them good. Serm. I.

That condition is moſt deſirable by all, in which they may beſt ſerve and enjoy God, and in which their eternal intereſts may be beſt provided for and ſecured. That meaſure of worldly advantages is beſt for all, and ſhould be moſt deſired by all, that will beſt ſerve theſe purpoſes and ends. But when theſe ends ſhall be neglected and overlooked, when perſons ſhall deſire the things of this world for themſelves, ſeparate from ſuch conſideration or regards, or ſhall deſire more of theſe worldly things than will ſerve theſe ends, that is to ſay, more than would do them good: their deſires that prevail in them this way are covetous deſires, and this may be juſtly termed covetouſneſs; for it ſeparates the creature from the creator, and ſignifies indeed a preferring of the creature to the creator, and ſetting it in God's place, even to the dethroning him from the place that belongs to him, which is his right, and which he alone has right to in our ſouls and affections, and ſo does manifeſtly diſcover that *idolatry* which this ſin of covetouſneſs is particularly charged with in Scripture.

6.) Laſtly, The *attendants and effects* of this evil deſire may tend farther to diſcover the nature of a covetous deſire, or covetouſneſs.

It is commonly attended with *diſtruſt of God's providence*, and *truſting in theſe worldly things*. Diſtruſt of God's providence always lies at the bottom, and is the common and conſtant ſpring of covetouſneſs; therefore when our Lord would cure his diſciples of it, he ſtops up this ſpring, and lays the ax to the root of diſtruſt: he ſends them to the lillies and graſs of the field, to the ravens and other fowls of the air, which while God takes care of, clothes and provides, he lets them know that they might be aſſured he would not neglect them. And

While perſons diſtruſt God's providence, they truſt or hope that the world will do that for them that they fear whether God will; they truſt in uncertain riches, they have their hearts departing from the Lord, and placed on mammon, fixed upon an idol, againſt the pſalmiſt's and the apoſtle's caution, *Pſal.* lxii. 10. 1 *Tim.* vi. 17. ſo manifeſtly is covetouſneſs idolatry. Mat. vi. 28, 29, 30 *compar'd with* Luke xii. 24, 27, 28.

It is attended by *diſcontent* with men's own circumſtances, and envying commonly at thoſe of others that are ſuperior; therefore ſays the apoſtle, *Let your converſation be without covetouſneſs*, and *be content with ſuch things as ye have*. And you may obſerve that he there takes in both this and the Heb. xiii. 5

Serm. I. former, when he adviſes them to this as a means of contentment, that they truſt the promiſe and providence of God, or his providence upon his promiſe made, who hath ſaid, *I will never leave thee, nor forſake thee.*

'Tis commonly attended with an *anxious care and thoughtfulneſs* for getting and keeping the things of this world, even ſuch as is diſtracting of the mind, and unfitting the man for the ſervice of God, or for the enjoying the proper comforts of a chriſtian, or of a man. Therefore our Lord in that vi. of *Matthew*, and in the chapter of my text, ſo earneſtly dehorts from this, and directs his diſciples that they *take no thought for the morrow*, take not too concerned thought what they ſhall eat or drink, or wherewith they ſhall be clothed, that they be not of doubtful mind, live not in careful ſuſpence, hovering as meteors in the air, as the word here uſed ſignifies, *ver.* 29.

It's commonly attended with ſuch an earneſt thought and purſuit of theſe worldly things, as even *engroſſes the thought and the man*, as fills up the time and thoughts; ſo that he can think or ſpeak of nothing elſe in a manner, but what his heart is ſet upon, his covetouſneſs, and what tends to gratify that. As his heart is ſet upon the world, and going after his covetouſneſs, this does he chuſe to talk of. As he thinks of the world only in a manner, out of the abundance of his heart his mouth ſpeaks, he ſpeaks either only of the world and worldly things, or of nothing ſo freely as theſe. And his time is engroſſed hereby; day and night is ſpent in ſuch care and thoughts, talk and purſuits. *Eccl.* ii. 23. *For all his days are ſorrows, and his travel grief; yea, his heart taketh not reſt in the night.*

It's commonly attended with, and has for its effect *fraud, injuſtice, oſſexage, oppreſſion, grinding the faces of the poor, lying, prophaning of the Lord's day*, and employing its ſacred time in common affairs for the ſerving avaritious deſires and deſigns. No ways are commonly ſtuck at by covetous perſons to ſerve their covetous purpoſes. Thoſe that are for making haſte to be rich, conſult not conſcience or innoceney, *Quod libet id licet his*——Their end they have propoſed to themſelves, muſt warrant their actions (how groſs ſoever) that make to it. Their covetous deſire and will is their law, makes all lawful with them that is for its ſervice; and takes off the reſtraint of all Laws, but what it gives and makes. This is commonly the caſe of covetous perſons.

But where it is otherwiſe, and there are ſome regards left to honour or honeſty, and conſcience is not quite ſtupified; yet the endleſs labours, the exceſſive fatigues, the reſtleſs turmoiling cares and thoughts wherewith they

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are exerciſed for the getting and keeping the world, to the plain damage of ſoul and body, while they *riſe up early ſit up late, eat the bread of ſorrows*, while they *diſquiet themſelves in vain*, while there is *no end of their labours, neither their eye ſatisfied with riches*; while their reſt is broken, their hearts are loaded with cares and fears, diſquieting and perplexing thoughts, ſo overcharged with worldly things, that they loſe their ſpiritual life and vigour, ſavour and taſte; they deny themſelves the things neceſſary for ſoul and body, neglect both in compariſon of worldly gain and advantage, diſſerve both, that they may ſerve theſe: as theſe are other attendants and effects of coveouſneſs, they are plain diſcoveries of the ſame. Serm. I. Pſ. cxxvii 2. Pſ. xxxix. 6. Eccl. iv. 8.

And thoſe that can ſo bereave their own ſouls of good, 'tis no wonder if they can bereave others alſo of the good they ſhould reap from them, withhold from others what is their due from them, and which they had in their power to give and yield to them; alms from the poor, relief from the indigent, bread from the hungry, clothes from the naked, medicine from the ſick, that are not able to furniſh themſelves with it, ſuitable ſupports and ſupplies from thoſe that need them, ſuitable encouragement to good works, the works of piety and charity. To be uſeful to ſuch ends, is a very valuable advantage of life, and the *proper work of rich men*; as ſuch the apoſtle orders it to be charged upon them: *Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor truſt in uncertain riches, but in the living God; who giveth us richly all things to enjoy: that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to diſtribute, willing to communicate, laying up in ſtore for themſelves a good foundation againſt the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.* 1 Tim. vi. 17, 18, 19.

We are to *ſell* what we have, to *give alms*, and ſo to provide for ourſelves bags that wax not old, a treaſure in heaven that fails not, and to expect, giving alms of ſuch things as we have, to have worldly enjoyments ſanctify'd, and all things pure to us: thus to purge ourſelves from the ſtain and ſoil we are apt to contract from the uſe of worldly enjoyments and poſſeſſions, and to draw down a bleſſing upon them, and upon ourſelves and others that do or ſhall uſe them, our families as well as our perſons; by *ſcattering*, expecting that we ſhall *encreaſe*, by *caſting* our *bread upon the waters*, that we ſhall *find it after many days*, from him, who with the merciful ſhows himſelf merciful, who will never be a debtor to his creature, and has promiſed to repay what is lent to him, by being lent to the poor, or willingly and faithfully ſpent in his ſervice. But a withholding in theſe more than is meet, Luke xii 33. Luke xi. 41.

as

Serm. I. as it's a common effect of a covetous deſire, and of covetouſneſs prevailing and taking place, will be found in
Prov. xi. 24. the iſſue to tend to poverty, *There is that ſcattereth, and yet encreaſeth, and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, and it tendeth to poverty*; to poverty temporal and ſpiritual, to them and theirs after them.

I have thus endeavoured to give you light for diſcerning this work of darkneſs, and to unravel to you this myſtery of iniquity; to open to you the nature of the covetouſneſs here taxed by our bleſſed Lord. And you have ſeen, that

The general nature of it lies in a deſire of having more, more of theſe worldly things, the wealth, riches, power and dominion of this world, and an exceſſive deſire this way, beyond all the bounds that God has ſet, and man ſhould ſet to theſe deſires.

Particularly it lies and is ſeen in ſuch exceſſive deſiring more than we have, more than is meet, more than is needful, more than God allows or ſees fit we ſhould have, more, finally, than would do us good. It is commonly attended with diſtruſt of God's providence, and truſting in theſe worldly things; diſcontent with our own circumſtances, and envying at thoſe of other men; an anxious care and thoughtfulneſs for getting and keeping theſe worldly things, even ſuch as diſtract the mind, and unfit the man for the ſervice of God, or for the enjoying the proper comforts of a chriſtian, or a man: ſuch an earneſt thought and purſuit of theſe worldly things, as even engroſſes the thought and the man, and fills up the time and thoughts, ſo that he can think or ſpeak of, or purſue in a manner nothing elſe, and is continually, day and night, fill'd herewith. It's commonly attended with, and has for its effects fraud and injuſtice, coſenage, oppreſſion and grinding the faces of the poor; lying, prophaning and proſtituting ſacred time to ſerve covetous purpoſes, with wronging a man's ſelf, and withholding what is meet from himſelf and others, withholding from them what is their due from him, and what is in the power of his hand to give, tho he chuſes wrongfully to withhold it from them.

Theſe things may have ſerved to ſignify ſomewhat to us of the abominable odiouſneſs and iniquity of this ſin of covetouſneſs, and may help us in ſome meaſure to account for what we are to conſider, in the ſecond place.

II. The reaſon why a double guard is ſet here by our Saviour againſt it; *Take heed, and beware of covetouſneſs.* The

1. Rea-

Serm. I.

1. The firſt reaſon is, the abominable odiouſneſs and provoking iniquity of this ſin: the great God does many ways ſhow his utmoſt abhorrence of it, and high provocation by it.

It's ſtrange (and can have no reaſon aſſign'd for it, but men's general concern herein, and corruption hereby, that makes them ready to excuſe one another, and to think and ſpeak lightly of that which few eſcape the guilt of) that men, that Chriſtians ſhould be ſo ready as they are to ſpeak favourably of this ſin, and of thoſe that are guilty of it. "Such a one is a good man, or a good woman, "but they are covetous." This laſt is unſaying what was ſaid before. A covetous chriſtian is juſt as much ſenſe as a heathen chriſtian, a mahometan chriſtian. How could the bleſſed God be expected to ſhow how utterly diſpleaſing and provoking covetouſneſs is to him in a more emphatical manner than he has done? when he has made it one of his ten commandments, *Thou ſhalt not covet*; when he has declared that he *abhors the covetous*; when he ſtiles covetouſneſs *idolatry*; when he calls covetous perſons by the names of *adulterers* and *adultereſſes*; when he ranks covetouſneſs with the moſt deteſtable pollutions, and orders it not to be ſo much as nam'd among chriſtians but with deteſtation, even as ever they would maintain their chriſtian character, and act as it becometh ſaints: when this ſin is ſo frequently ſingled out from among others, and ſhown to be ſo terribly incenſing his juſtice, and drawing down his curſe and heavy indignation upon perſons, families and nations. I have already mentioned the caſe of *Gehazi*, who had for his covetouſneſs a leproſy preſently ſeizing him, and entailed upon his family; and of *Balaam* in part, who was reſiſted for this ſin, and near being ſlain by an angel, and was afterward ſlain by the ſword: and you are not ignorant of the caſe of *Achan*, how his coveting the money and the *Babyloniſh* garment, brought utter ruin upon himſelf and his family. So it's ſaid the curſe of God, which is repreſented in *Zech.* v. by a flying roll of great dimenſions, its length twenty cubits, and its breadth ten (to note the number of curſes and woes it contain'd) ſhould enter into the houſe of the thief (and you know it's covetouſneſs makes thieves) and ſhould remain in it, and conſume it with the timber and ſtones of it: ſo it is ſaid of the people of *Iſrael*, *For the iniquity of his covetouſneſs was I wroth with him, and ſmote him; I hid me and was wroth.* And when God declares concerning this people in the foregoing chapter, that he would bring ſuch ſlaughter and deſtruction upon them, as to make their carcaſſes meat for the fowls of heaven, this heavy judgment

Pſal. x. 3.
Col. iii. 5.
Jam. iv. 4.
Eph. v. 3.
Joſh. xiii. 22.
Chap. vii.
Iſa. lvii. 17.

Serm. I. is laid at the door of their covetouſneſs: *All the beaſts of the field come to devour, yea all the beaſts in the foreſt, his watch-*
Chap. lvi. 9, 10, 11. *men are blind, they are all ignorant, they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark, ſleeping, lying down, loving to ſlumber, yea they are greedy dogs, which can never have enough, and they are ſhepherds that cannot underſtand, they all look to their own way, every one for his gain from his quarter.* And this ſin is particularly, and in the firſt place mentioned, as what brought upon them the dreadful judgment of the fatal, long liv'd *Babyloniſh*
Jer. vi. 11, &c. Ch. viii. 10. *compar'd.* captivity. Now if we conſider thus the abominable odiouſneſs and provoking iniquity of this ſin, and how many ſins it contains in it, and has for its attendants and effects, as you have already heard, 'tis no wonder that our Lord, who was to this purpoſe manifeſted, that he might
1 Joh. iii. 8. *deſtroy the works of the devil, (i. e.* to deſtroy ſin in the world) ſhould for this reaſon put a double guard upon this ſin, and order his diſciples to be in a ſpecial manner watchful againſt it. Tho another reaſon hereof we may ſuppoſe to be,

2. The great danger perſons of all ſorts are in of being overtaken by it, and of being held of it when they are overtaken by it. As great as this ſin is, as provoking as it is in the ſight of God, and as endangering as it is to the ſoul, it is what perhaps few eſcape in ſome degree, and what all are ſubject to be overtaken by; it ſteals upon perſons unawares, inſinuates itſelf inſenſibly, ſeizes and takes hold of them when they know it not, and little ſuſpect it. Men of all ranks and conditions, of all circumſtances, ſtations, relations, are ſubject to it. 'Tis not only the ſin of the *rich* but of the *poor*, of the *ignorant* but of the *learned*; *magiſtrates*, *miniſters*, *kings*, *ſubjects*, the *tradeſman*, the *lawyer*, the *phyſician*, the *farmer*, the *gentleman*, the *yeoman*, the *labouring man*, the *maſter*, the *ſervant*, the *beggar*; all are ſubject to it: tho it mars every relation, and therefore magiſtrates are order'd to be men of
Ex. xviii. 21. truth, *fearing God, and hating covetouſneſs*, without which they will be open to bribes, and act injuſtice, and have their power injurious; and kings that are under its in-
Prov. xxviii. 15. fluence are compar'd to a *roaring lion and a ranging bear*, miniſters in whom it prevails are call'd *greedy dogs*, and
Iſa. lvi. 11. men of all ſorts that are addicted to it, and habitually prevail'd upon by it, are join'd with the vileſt company, and excluded the heavenly inheritance. Yet all are ſubject to it, and men of all ranks, from the higheſt to the
1 Cor. vi. 9, 10. loweſt, are caution'd againſt it; the king that was to be ſet over God's people, is charg'd not greatly to multiply
Deut. xvii. 17. to himſelf ſilver nor gold. Miniſters are ordered not to
1 Tim. iii. 3. be greedy of filthy lucre, and ſervants not to be purloining,

ing, *but ſhowing all good fidelity.* It has more ſeeming reaſons to be given for it, more pleas and excuſes to be made for it, than moſt other ſins, and more fair colours to be drawn over it; it more generally therefore recommends itſelf, and is apt more generally to prevail, than many, if not moſt others, over perſons of all ranks. It is therefore very remarkable, that when perſons of various ſtations and conditions applied to *John Baptiſt* (when they knew and believed him to be a prophet ſent of God, to inſtruct them in his will, and were awaken'd and rous'd by his doctrine) to conſult and enquire of him what they ſhould do; that his advice to them all is ſumm'd up in two words, that *they ſhould be merciful, and not covetous.* When he had charg'd them to bring forth fruits meet for repentance, and not to pretend to plead that they had *Abraham* for their Father, for that God was able (if they ſhould be rejected and deſtroyed) to raiſe up of ſtones children to *Abraham*, and aſſur'd them that the ax was now laid to the root of the trees, ſo that *every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down and caſt into the fire*; and the people hereupon ask him, *What ſhall we do then?* upon this we are told, *He anſwereth and ſaith unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none, and he that hath meat let him do likewiſe: then came alſo publicans to be baptized, and ſaid unto him, Maſter, what ſhall we do? and he ſaid unto them, Exact no more than that which is appointed you: and the ſoldiers likewiſe demanded of him, ſaying, And what ſhall we do? and he ſaid unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuſe any falſely, and be content with your wages.*

Serm. I. Tit. ii. 10. Luke iii. 11—15.

And as this is a ſin men of all ſorts are endanger'd being overtaken by, ſo are thoſe perſons in danger of being held of it, that are overtaken by it, for the reaſons now mention'd. There's more colour of reaſon this ſin offers, more pleas it makes, than moſt others. The drunkard or ſwearer are more eaſily by much convinced, than the covetous perſon. It defies the means of conviction, and defeats them; *The Phariſees that were covetous heard all theſe things, and they derided him*; they derided our Lord, and what he ſaid, when he had been preaching againſt covetouſneſs, and for a right improvement of this world's goods, in order to the ſecuring better things. So when our Lord bid the young man, that declar'd he had kept all the commandments from his youth, if he would be perfect, *go and ſell all that* he had, and he ſhould *have treaſure in heaven*; upon this it is ſaid, *He went away ſorrowful, for he had great poſſeſſions:* whereupon our Saviour tells his diſciples, that *Verily a rich man ſhould hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. And again*

Luke xvi. 8—14. Mat. xix. 20—24.

Serm. I. Mat. xiii. 22. *I ſay unto you, It is eaſier for a camel to paſs thro the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. The cares of the world, and the deceitfulneſs of riches choak the word, and it becometh unfruitful.* Covetouſneſs prevails againſt the means of grace, and defeats the moſt probable and likely methods of mens ſalvation. Covetouſneſs will either cauſe men to be raiſing objections againſt the preacher and his doctrine; or if they cannot find fault with either, but muſt be forc'd to commend both, or with ſome ſort of pleaſure to entertain them; yet it will, while it prevails, raiſe ſuch ſtrong prejudices againſt the truth, as ſhall effectually hinder its entrance into them, and their compliance with it, and the power and efficacy of God's word upon them in a ſaving way; and notwithſtanding all that is ſpoken to them in God's name, they will go on to do as they have done, and have their hearts ſtill ſet upon, and their lives going after their covetous practices. See *Ezek.* xxxiii. 30, &c. *Alſo thou ſon of man, the children of thy people ſtill are talking againſt thee by the walls, and in the doors of the houſes, and ſpeak one to another, every one to his brother, ſaying, Come I pray you, and hear what is the word that cometh forth from the Lord: and they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they ſit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them; for with their mouth they ſhow much love, but their heart goeth after their covetouſneſs; and lo thou art unto them as a very lovely ſong of one that hath a pleaſant voice, and can play well on an inſtrument, for they hear thy words, but they do them not.*

As then this ſin of covetouſneſs has ſuch abominable odiouſneſs and ſuch provoking iniquity belonging to it, and as perſons of all ſorts and conditions are in ſo great danger of being overtaken, and held by it; for theſe reaſons we may ſuppoſe our bleſſed Lord has put a double guard upon it, and for theſe reaſons all that pretend to be his diſciples, ſhould count themſelves concerned to uſe their utmoſt endeavour and their utmoſt caution to avoid it, ſhould *take heed and beware of covetouſneſs.*

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SERMON II.

III. I Am to open the force of the argument propoſed by our bleſſed Saviour to keep us from the ſin he here guards us againſt (the provoking grievous ſin of covetouſneſs) in what follows in the text; *For a man's life conſiſteth not in the abundance of the things he poſſeſſeth.* By *life* here is meant not life only in an abſolute ſenſe, but this conſider'd in relation to the means that ſupport and ſecure it, and render it deſirable, valuable and comfortable: ſo that when it is ſaid, *A man's life conſiſteth not in the abundance of the things which he poſſeſſeth*, it may have theſe ſeveral meanings:

1. That the *prolongation* of life does not depend upon outward abundance.
2. That the *eaſe, good and enjoyment* of life does not conſiſt herein.
3. That the *ſervice or uſefulneſs* of life is not govern'd by this abundance.
4. That the *ſafety* of life does not depend hereupon.
5. That the *comfort* of life cannot be this way ſecur'd, or does not conſiſt herein.
6. That the *end* of life will not be this way provided for; and therefore,
7. That the *gain and advantage* of life will not be this way ſecur'd.

Serm. II. By theſe things our bleſſed Saviour does, as we may ſay, cut the ground from under the feet of covetous perſons, and ſap and undermine the very foundations of covetouſneſs, by anſwering the pleas that are commonly made for it: the Son of man (to whom all judgment is committed) does in part, as it were, anticipate the judgment of the great day, by utter ſilencing the covetous perſon, and rendring thoſe ſpeechleſs that were for hiding their Lord's talent in a napkin, and burying it again in the ground, from whence it was taken for uſe and improvement.

Theſe are the common pleas of covetous perſons for their covetouſneſs, and the reaſons why they think themſelves reaſonable in the unreaſonable, inſatiable, deſires they nouriſh and cheriſh after more of this world. The covetous think they ſhall by their covetous multiplying and increaſing to themſelves the good things of this life, provide themſelves of the proper means of lengthening and protracting their lives, that by this means they ſhall provide for their eaſe and enjoyment, that they ſhall thus be of more ſignificancy, and of more ſervice in the world, that they ſhall thus be ſecur'd from the inconveniences and evils to which others are, and they might otherwiſe be expoſed; that they ſhall thus ſecure to themſelves, and have the command of the conveniences of life, and have their lives more comfortable than other men; that they ſhall by this means provide for their own comfort in proportion to the quantity of their worldly abundance, and for the comfort of theirs after them when they ſhall leave this world, and that thus they ſhall be many ways conſiderable gainers; they ſhall gain many advantages to themſelves, by gaining the abundance of this world.

All this our Lord ſeems to deny in the expreſſion we have under conſideration, and ſo to put to ſilence the ignorance of covetous perſons (who propoſe theſe things to themſelves by their unreaſonable, unbounded, covetous deſires after worldly abundance) when he ſays and offers it as a reaſon againſt ſuch covetous deſires, that *a man's life conſiſteth not in the abundance of the things that he poſſeſſeth.* Theſe things therefore (which we may reaſonably look upon as contain'd in this expreſſion of our Lord's) may be worthy of our particular conſideration, and we ſhall endeavour to conſider them accordingly. And when we are told, as here, by our Lord, that *a man's life conſiſteth not in the abundance of the things which he poſſeſſeth*, this may be ſuppoſed to ſignify to us, and we ſhall from hence endeavour to ſhow you,

1. That

1. That the *prolongation of life* does not depend upon outward abundance. This is, I am perſuaded, with many a ſecret reaſon for their covetouſneſs. They eagerly deſire and endeavour after worldly abundance, that ſo they may be provided of the means of life and its continuance, and hope upon their plentiful proviſion this way, to have their lives ſpin out themſelves to a greater length, than otherwiſe they might reach to. But this is a fond thought, a vain and fooliſh imagination.

Tho it cannot be denied that ſome die by poverty, yet theſe are few compared with the numbers that die by plenty. Gluttony and intemperance deſtroy vaſtly more than penury and indigence. More, unſpeakably more periſh thro the abuſe and exceſſive uſe of the means of ſuſtaining life, than do by the want of them. If the want of meat, and drink, and phyſick, ſhould be ſuppoſed to ſlay its thouſands, the immoderate uſe of theſe does certainly kill its ten thouſands, and a much greater number in proportion to the other. But however, it ought to be a thing allow'd and granted among chriſtians (as what has the faireſt ground and firmeſt foundation in Scripture) that the term of man's life is ſet by God, that there is *an appointed time to man on earth*; that *our days are determined, the number of our months is with God, he has appointed our bounds that we cannot paſs*: that there is to every one a ſet time for the continuance and duration of their temporal life, which none ſhall exceed, or by any means be able to paſs over, and that when *a few years*, or months, or weeks, of which that time conſiſts, *are come*, they *ſhall go the way whence they ſhall not return*; and tho perſons are and ſhall be immortal till that time comes, yet when once it is come, they muſt go, and all that this world can yield and offer will by no means prevail for their continuance here, or prevent their paſſage into an eternal world: all the abundance of this world, all the intereſt of friends, all the advantage of means and medicine, will be of no ſignificancy or avail to prevent the arreſt of death, or the decree of God for their removal hence, from taking its effect upon them to this end. *They that truſt in their wealth, and boaſt themſelves in the multitude of their riches, none of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ranſom for him*; and if they cannot do this for their brother, when they are well and at liberty to uſe all the advantages this world gives them in its greateſt plenty and enjoyment; much leſs can they do it for themſelves, when they are ſtripped of theſe advantages, and can ſcarce make uſe of any thing. It follows, *For the Redemption of their Soul is precious*,

Job vii. 1. Ch. xiv. 5.

Ch. xvi. 22.]

Pſal. xlix. 8.

Serm. II. *cious, and it ceaſeth for ever, that he ſhould ſtill live for ever, and not ſee corruption.*

2. That the *eaſe, good and enjoyment* of life does not conſiſt herein. This is a manifeſt common occaſion and ground of mens covetous deſires and labours after worldly abundance; and as ſuch our Lord propoſes and expoſes it in the parable that he gives out, and that immediately follows the text. *And he ſpake a parable unto them, ſaying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully, and he thought within himſelf, ſaying, What ſhall I do, becauſe I have no room where to beſtow my fruits? and he ſaid, This will I do, I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there will I beſtow all my fruits and my goods, and I will ſay to my ſoul, Soul, thou haſt much goods laid up for many years, take thine eaſe, eat, drink and be merry: but God ſaid unto him, Thou fool, this night ſhall thy ſoul be required of thee, and then whoſe ſhall theſe things be which thou haſt provided?* It's like the former may be included herein, when it's ſaid, *Thou haſt goods laid up for many years, eat, drink and be merry*, that this rich fool ſhow'd his folly in thinking and ſaying with himſelf, that theſe goods he had laid up ſhould be a warrant, as it were, or ſecurity for the continuance of his life, and it may be for the eaſe and enjoyment of it for many years. But it's manifeſt that his inward thought was, that the eaſe, good and enjoyment of his life would be this way provided for, and that for many years, and therefore he bleſſes himſelf, and ſays to his ſoul thereupon, *Soul, take thine eaſe, for thou haſt goods laid up for many years.* He thought theſe were *his goods, even the goods of his ſoul*; tho they were as unſuitable to ſatisfy a ſoul, or to furniſh its good, as ſtones and pebbles are to nouriſh human bodies, or to furniſh the conveniences of life: yet theſe were his goods, his ſoul's goods, yea *all its goods*, the things it was moſt ſet upon, moſt deſirous of obtaining, and which when they were now obtained, it has its full ſatisfaction and perfect acquieſcence in: he calls upon his ſoul now to take its eaſe, eat, drink and be merry, that is, take its plentiful meals, its pleaſant morſels, and full draughts of the good that was thus afforded it, and whereby its comfort and enjoyment were ſufficiently and abundantly provided for, for many years. But God calls him *Fool* hereupon (as every one muſt inherit this character that acts at this rate) and ſays to him, *This night ſhall thy ſoul be required of thee, and then whoſe ſhall theſe things be that thou haſt provided?* He ſuddenly ſnatches away his ſoul, takes it away with a taunt and juſt upbraiding of him for his folly: "You "have been at a great deal of pains to provide yourſelf

Ver. 16, &c.

"of

" of theſe earthly goods, which you fooliſhly and wic- Serm. II.
" kedly looked upon as your ſoul's proper and ſatisfactory
" goods, you reckoned your ſoul well provided with them
" even for many years, and ſo would now have it take
" its reſt and eaſe; you have been a fool in all, and ſhall
" die as a fool dies, that had opportunities of knowing
" and doing better, and your poor unprovided ſoul ſhall
" this night launch into eternity, and then whoſe ſhall
" theſe things be for which you have ſo toil'd and ſweat,
" and have neglected my poor and your own ſoul; they
" were goods here, but you ſhall leave them at once,
" in a night, this night, and that to thoſe that perhaps you
" little expected, and who may employ to better purpoſes,
" it may be, what you have employ'd in ſo vile a manner,
" or doing as you have done, and being of you provided
" for the gratifying of the ſame luſts, ſhall periſh as you
" do, and have their ſins helping to enflame your reckon-
" ing, and to aggravate your condemnation, and eternal
" miſery and torment:" *ſo is he that layeth up treaſure to himſelf, and is not rich towards God.* Like this fool upon record are all they, that, as he did, are coveting abundance of earthly good for their own eaſe and comfort, neglecting to uſe and improve worldly advantages and enjoyments for God's glory, or for the purpoſes of doing good to themſelves and others. Which leads to the third thing.

3. That the *ſervice or uſefulneſs* of life is not govern'd by this worldly abundance. This is the hypocritical guiſe that covetouſneſs ſometimes puts on. When the meaſure of mens deſires and labours for this world are ſuch as admit of no juſt apology, but are manifeſtly unreaſonable and covetous (as exceeding all bounds God has ſet to ſuch deſires and labours to make them lawful and warrantable) they will be ready to palliate and excuſe the covetouſneſs that thus appears, by ſaying that they do not deſire after, or labour for theſe things themſelves for their own ſolitary worth, or as a means of furniſhing their own ſolitary good and enjoyment, but as a means of rendring them of more ſignificancy, of more uſe and ſervice in the world, that they may do that ſervice with them that they could not without them. But may not that of the apoſtle be here applied? *For if the truth of God hath more a-* Rom. iii.
bounded thro my lye, to his glory, why yet am I alſo judged as a 7, 8.
ſinner? And not rather as we be ſlanderouſly reported, and as ſome affirm that we ſay, Let us do evil that good may come of it? whoſe damnation is juſt. This is commonly a mere figment, a fair pretence to cover and juſtify foul deſires and actions. We are by no means to do evil, that good may come of it.

Serm. II. it. A good intention will by no means juſtify ill actions, or ſo much as an evil deſire. God and conſcience muſt be expected to condemn us, if we pretend, out of a good deſign, to break a divine commandment. It's impious to pretend to honour God by gratifying our own luſts; and one of theſe two things may be expected to happen to perſons that act thus wickedly, upon the view I have mention'd, that either they ſhould miſs of their end of being rich, or if they gain this point, the church and the world ſhall find the vanity of thoſe pretenſions, they made to cover their covetous thirſt after riches and worldly abundance, by the failure of their doing good to either, at leaſt in any proportion to what their abilities are. And as it's manifeſt in itſelf, that in order to ſervice and uſefulneſs in the world (and very great degrees of the ſame) abundance is not neceſſary; ſo it is a common obſervation, juſtify'd by every day's experience, That they are the middle ſort of men that do the moſt good.

4. That the *ſafety of life* does not depend hereupon. The abundance of worldly things that men are apt ſo greedily to deſire and covet after, is not neceſſary, nor is it uſeful, or of effect to make men's lives more ſecure from the many dangers and evils to which they are ſubject.

The greateſt abundance cannot keep off the evils and inconveniences of life. Sickneſs and death ſhow no reſpect to greatneſs, but do as boldly enter the palaces of princes, as the beggar's hovel; *Pallida mors æquo pulſat pede pauperum tabernas regumque turres.* Hor. Dangers and diſaſters do as well, as ſoon and as eaſily overtake and ſeize the richeſt and greateſt, as thoſe of lower eſtate, and in the meaneſt circumſtances and condition. He that made the rich and the poor equally, has both equally in his hand and under his government. He has equal power over both, and can lay his hand equally upon either, at what time, and in what way and manner ſoever he pleaſes: he has the whole diſpoſal of the lot of both. Where the mountain is largeſt and ſtands ſtrongeſt, it is ſtill depending upon his favours that makes it ſo, and if he hides his face, thoſe with whom it is ſo now, and who thought it would be ſo for continuance, are preſently troubled. *David*, who had as much to glory in, as to theſe, as any in his day, found it ſo often, and makes an open confeſſion of it (of his own raſh and unwarrantable concluſion, and of the power and providence of God oppoſing and contradicting it) in that *Pſal.* xxx. 6, 7. *And in my proſperity I ſaid, I ſhall never be moved, thou, Lord, by thy favour haſt made my mountain to ſtand ſtrong, thou didſt hide thy face and I was troubled.*

troubled. And *Job* is ſet forth as a remarkable inſtance hereof, who from the greateſt man in all the eaſt, rich beyond all in ſubſtance and poſſeſſions, is ſuddenly brought to a dunghill, to ſcrape himſelf there with a potſherd, his body overrun with ſore boils from head to foot, when his ſubſtance and children had been before deſtroyed by a dreadful and ſudden hand of providence. Serm. II.

Indeed higher circumſtances, and greater worldly abundance, are ſo far from being a proviſion for the greater ſecurity and ſafety of thoſe to whom they belong, that they do manifeſtly make perſons the broader marks of others envy, they ſerve to open more doors to the entrance of hurt and injury, grief and ſorrow, and to encreaſe the account of the intereſts and inſtances, in which they are more liable to be troubleſomely affected than Perſons of inferior circumſtances. So that,

5. The *comfort of life* cannot be this way ſecured, or does not conſiſt herein. 'Tis the comfort of it wherein life much conſiſts. A diſeaſed dying life, a pained, ſuffering, ſorrowful life, are not, cannot be deſirable in themſelves, tho they may be for their uſes and ſervices. And indeed it is only the ſervice and comfort of life, that can make life deſirable or valuable. Now, as we have ſhown you as to the former, ſo it's manifeſt as to this latter, that it does not conſiſt in the abundance of theſe outward things, nor can be ſecured by the greateſt abundance of them.

Do not the greater cares viſit greater perſons more than thoſe of inferior rank? Muſt not they that dwell in their fine houſes, ride in their gilded coaches, and are attended with the greateſt and moſt ſplendid retinue, have neceſſarily more cares and fears attending them than thoſe in meaner circumſtances? The trouble of a large family, of large acquaintance, of great entertainments, long and almoſt conſtant attendance, muſt be a great confinement upon their thoughts and lives, and render them leſs comfortable and free to enjoy themſelves than thoſe that are in lower circumſtances. The lives of ſuch muſt (or at leaſt many times do) ſpend themſelves in a continual hurry, and in frequent exceſſes of eating and drinking. They know not the pleaſure commonly of eating to ſatisfy hunger, or drinking to quench thirſt, but have nature continually ſatiated and overcharged, to the breeding diſtempers, and laying the foundation commonly of painful diſeaſes, or troubleſome ones; ſome of which are peculiar in a manner to rich perſons, or thoſe that are in better worldly circumſtances, or in the common phraſe, live well: and

Serm. II. the foundation is oft thus laid of pain and miſery to their children and poſterity. Health, that gives a ſavour and ſweetneſs to all other enjoyments, and renders perſons at liberty to enjoy all the other comforts, as well as to do the ſervices of life, is certainly much more the bleſſing of poor perſons and families than of rich, of thoſe in meaner than of thoſe in higher circumſtances; and this greateſt of temporal bleſſings the abundance of the world cannot give or protect. With how very different aſpects with regard to health do rich and poor perſons and families frequently look? With how much more eagerneſs, heartineſs, true ſavour and reliſh, and ſtrong appetite, do the poor and labouring men take their ordinary coarſe fare, than rich perſons their coſtly proviſions? There is no compariſon ordinarily betwixt the ſtrength of poor and rich. And as to inward peace and enjoyment, worldly abundance may and does commonly much hinder it, but it can by no means purchaſe and give it; and this is certainly a bleſſing that is much more commonly found with perſons of meaner ſtations and in lower circumſtances, than with thoſe in higher condition. The true peace of God, peace of conſcience, peace attended with or proceeding from it, good teſtimony, peace with God and from God, the peace of Chriſt, that peace that he has left with his diſciples, and bequeath'd as a legacy to them, and that he gives thoſe that are truly ſuch, is more commonly to be found with poor than rich perſons. They are the poor commonly that receive the Goſpel, its grace and bleſſings, when the rich deſpiſe them and evil entreat thoſe that receive them, as ſays the apoſtle, *Hearken, my beloved brethren, hath not God choſen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom, which he hath promiſed to them that love him? But ye have deſpiſed the poor. Do not rich men oppreſs you, and draw you before the judgment ſeats? Do not they blaſpheme that worthy name, by the which ye are called?* The comfort of life cannot then be ſecured by, nor does it conſiſt in worldly abundance.

Jam. ii. 5, 6, 7.

6. *The end of life* will not be provided for by the greateſt worldly abundance. This is a great ground of the covetous deſires and labours of many, that they may thus ſecure a large portion of this world to their children, that they may *leave* ſufficient *ſubſtance unto their babes*, that their children and deſcendants may be amply provided for. And how notoriouſly is that truth of God abuſed by many? *He that provides not for his own, but eſpecially for thoſe of his own houſe, hath denied the faith, and is worſe than an infidel.* While under pretence of reſpect to this holy declaration, they trample

Pſ. xvii. 14.

1 Tim. v. 8.

trample the many laws of God under foot, that ſhould ſet bounds to the deſires and endeavours this way, and have no end of their care, and thought, and labours, that they may provide for their own houſe; while God's houſe, and their own houſes, in many important Reſpects, their own ſouls, and the ſouls of theirs, are upon this account horribly neglected?

Yea, a common caſe it is for thoſe, that have no children and families to provide for, to ſet no bounds to their covetous deſires and labours, and to be endleſly, and with the greateſt warmth and vigour to the very laſt, purſuing after worldly gain and advantages, that they may amaſs to themſelves great eſtates, and leave theſe behind them to they know not whom. This *Solomon* long ſince took notice of, and expos'd as a ſingular vanity he had ſeen under the ſun: *Then I returned and ſaw vanity under the ſun.* Eccl. iv. 7, 8. *There is one alone, and there is not a ſecond, yea he hath no child nor brother; yet there is no end of all his labour, neither is his eye ſatisfied with riches, neither ſaith he, For whom do I labour and bereave my ſoul of good? This is alſo vanity, yea it is a ſore travel.*

And indeed in this matter the caſe is the ſame, whether a man have any or none, few or more to take care of; where covetouſneſs prevails, his cares and labours are the ſame. The pleaſure men take in their covetous deſires and labours, engage them in them, and engage them to carry them on, how little reaſon ſoever there may be for this worldly care and thought: as I remember to have heard of a perſon who was grievouſly given this way, when a friend talk'd to him ſeriouſly about it, and told him what little reaſon he had to be ſo ſordidly covetous; and as an argument to preſs home what he was diſcourſing about, told him that his ſon would, in likelihood, as merrily ſpend his eſtate, as he had carefully got and kept it: Let him do ſo, ſays he, if he will; I defy him to take more pleaſure in ſpending my eſtate, than I have took in getting it.

But alas! as the prophet ſpeaks, *Jer.* xvii. 11. *As a partridge ſitteth upon eggs, and hatcheth them not; ſo he that getteth riches, and not by right, ſhall leave them in the midſt of his days, and at his end ſhall be a fool.* This is the caſe of covetous perſons, they get riches, not by right, but by breaking thro the laws of God (the reſtraints he has put them under thereby) and denying and withholding the reſpects due to God and man; and tho they thought they ſhow'd their wiſdom hereby (and acted a wiſer part than thoſe that acted otherwiſe) yet they did hereby ſhow themſelves egregious fools, caſting off that *fear of the Lord*, which

Serm. II. it *the beginning of* all *wiſdom*; and continuing to act at this rate, living and dying in this condition (as covetouſneſs ſeldom leaves thoſe to whom it becomes habitual, and therefore there is great danger they are in of ſo doing) whenever God ſhall call them by death, in the end they will prove the greateſt fools; while they ſhall go unprovided into an eternal ſtate, in which they muſt ever abide, and of making ſuitable proviſion for which they were hinder'd, by having their time and thoughts wholly taken up in making proviſion for this world, that all muſt, and all know they muſt, in a little time leave and part with.

You ſee, in the place I have already open'd to you, our Lord puts the fool upon all that *lay up treaſure for themſelves, and are not rich toward God* in grace and good works. As he elſewhere does, when he propoſes the
Mat. xvi. 26. queſtion, *What ſhall it profit a man, if he ſhall gain the whole world, and loſe his own ſoul; or what ſhall a man give in exchange for his ſoul?* As the wiſe man alſo does, when he tells us, that *the getting of riches by a lying tongue* (as they muſt do, who are covetouſly taking and getting them, in contradiction to their baptiſmal and ſacramental vows and oath given to God) *is like a vanity toſſed to and fro of them that love death.* To prefer love to the world to love to their maker and redeemer, the ſecuring a worldly intereſt to the ſecuring the favour of God's ſpiritual and eternal bleſſings, to love death rather than life, eternal death rather than ſpiritual and eternal life, to prefer the world and its advantages (that are but of a temporary and ſhort duration) to the comforts, and bleſſings, and happy and great enjoyments of an eternal world and ſtate; to ſuffer the care for the body, a rotting, dying carcaſs (that muſt in a little time be made meat for worms) and the bodily life that will ſoon end, to hinder us of making ſuitable proviſion for the precious immortal ſoul and its eternal eſtate: this ſurely muſt be the greateſt folly. And will it be any argument of the wiſdom of theſe perſons, or any comfort to them, will it not rather be a tormenting reflection to them when they are leaving this world, if they have any ſenſe, that at the expence of their own ſouls, and with the horrible neglect of the ſouls of their children and families, they have been furniſhing food and fuel for their childrens luſts, and putting a ſword into their hands, whereby to do greater miſchief to themſelves and the world, than otherwiſe they might have been capable of doing, and it may be of bringing upon them ſwifter and more notorious deſtruction than otherwiſe might have overtaken them; and that they ſhould ſo have their ſins as well as their own to anſwer and ſuffer for?

Job v. 3, 4. *I have ſeen the fooliſh taking root, but ſuddenly I curſed his habitation; his children are far from ſafety, and they are cruſhed in the gate, neither is there any to deliver them.* The gate was the place of judgment, ſo that the expreſſion may note their being brought under a capital ſentence, from which they could not be redeemed, and being accordingly cut off by the ſword of juſtice for thoſe crimes, which the wealthy circumſtances they were in led them to commit, and the guilt and puniſhment whereof they might have eſcaped, had they had leſs of this world. However this may prove, upon the whole certain it is, that as the wealth and riches of this world cannot follow any to another (and could they do ſo, are no current coin there) ſo 'tis not the greateſt worldly abundance that can make our end happy, or our children ſafe or happy, that we ſhould leave behind us. Outward great plenty and worldly abundance are more frequently curſes than they are bleſſings, they are grievous temptations and dangerous ſnares to the ſouls of the moſt, inſtruments of much wickedneſs, and occaſions of great evil. The happineſs of the lives, and the comforts of the end of our ſelves and ours, muſt be otherwiſe and better provided for, than by great worldly abundance, and can never be provided for by that. Serm. II.

7. The *gain and advantage of life* will not be ſecur'd by the abundance of the things we ſhould poſſeſs. Gain and advantage are the things that covetous hearts are ſet upon, that covetous deſires are ſtill aſpiring after, and that all the care and labours of covetous perſons are endleſly and unweariedly employed in ſeeking after, and endeavouring to ſecure to themſelves. But the conſiderations we have already had before us, may ſerve to convince us, that the gain and advantage of life is not to be ſecur'd by the greateſt worldly abundance that the moſt covetous perſon could deſire or reach after. For, if the prolongation of life does not depend upon outward abundance, if the greateſt worldly abundance cannot do any thing to protract the lives of ourſelves, or of thoſe we wiſh well and beſt to; if the eaſe, good or enjoyment of life does not conſiſt in this worldly abundance; if the ſervice or uſefulneſs of life is not govern'd hereby, if the ſafety of life does not depend hereupon, if the comfort of life cannot be this way ſecured, does not conſiſt herein, if the end of life will not be this way provided for; then it may be readily concluded as what does naturally follow from theſe premiſſes, that the gain and advantage of life (which all muſt allow to lie much in theſe things) will not be this way ſecured.

The

Serm. II. The apoſtle aſſures us, that our gain is otherwhere to be ſought for than in worldly abundance, in that 1 *Tim.* vi. 6. *But godlineſs with contentment is great gain.* The context is very much to our preſent purpoſe, and therefore I ſhall acquaint you with it. He tells us of ſome in the foregoing verſe, that *ſuppoſed gain was godlineſs*; they thought, or acted as if they thought, in direct contradiction to what our Lord here aſſerts, that a man's life conſiſted in the abundance of what he poſſeſſed, and therefore that they were at all adventures, at all hazards, whatever they riſqued for it, by right or wrong to get worldly abundance, and that whatever tended to promote their worldly intereſt and advantage, was reconcileable to religion, and allow'd by that. Whether the *Gnoſticks* are here particularly pointed at, as Dr. *Hammond* conceives, is not ſo material for us to enquire. The ſenſe and practice of ſuch perſons the apoſtle rejects with abhorrence, and orders chriſtians to turn away from thoſe that affected them, and then tells them where the true gain lay, which was in godlineſs with contentment: *Suppoſing that gain is godlineſs, from ſuch withdraw yourſelf; but godlineſs with contentment is great gain.* This thought he urges upon him, and for the preſſing him and others to attend to it, he adds; *For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we ſhall carry nothing out; and having food and raiment, let us be therewith content.* Nature is content with little, and grace ſhould be with as little; *but they that will be rich*, that notwithſtanding this declaration of what is the truth of the caſe here, will be content with nothing ſhort of the riches of this world, will greedily ſeek after theſe, and are reſolv'd to graſp them by whatever means; they *fall into temptation and a ſnare, and into many fooliſh and hurtful luſts, which drown men in deſtruction and perdition; for the love of money* (which puts all this forward, and prompts men hereto, puſhes on this deſire and reſolution in them, and puſhes them on in its purſuance) this love of money which lies at the bottom of, and is the root of this inordinate deſire, affection and reſolution, *is the root of all evil; which while ſome coveted after, they have erred concerning the faith, and pierced themſelves thro with many ſorrows.*

That which is the main thing the apoſtle here purſues, the main propoſition he lays down, and in purſuance whereof the reſt is offer'd, is, that *godlineſs with contentment is great gain*; this is the proper gain and advantage of Life: and to this all other advantages are owing that derive from it. Let a man be godly and content, and he may expect, whatever he has of the world, to have God's favour, God's peace, God's preſence, God's bleſſing. Let him

him be content with whatever lot and portion God is pleaſed to aſſign him of the preſent world and its enjoyments; let him ſeek and do righteouſneſs, follow after holineſs, ſtrenuouſly endeavour to make progreſs in the ſame, and he ſhall certainly find this to be the moſt thriving trade; he ſhall thus be bleſſed with ſpiritual bleſſings in heavenly things in Jeſus Chriſt, he ſhall be made meet for the inheritance among the ſaints in light, and brought to that in due time: and in the mean time ſhall be in thoſe circumſtances, and have that meaſure of worldly advantages and enjoyments that ſhall be beſt for him, and moſt happily tending to advance his preſent comfort and real good, and his preparation for that other and better world, and the better enjoyments thereof: *Mat.* vi. 33. *But ſeek firſt the kingdom of God and his righteouſneſs, and all theſe things ſhall be added unto you.* He ſhall find thus *godlineſs profitable for all things, having promiſe of the life that now is, and that which is to come.* The gain and advantage of life then are not to be ſecured by worldly abundance, but will be ſo by true godlineſs with contentment. Serm. II. 1 Tim. iv. 8.

I have thus finiſh'd the doctrinal part, and would now,

IV. Offer ſomewhat by way of Application. And the only uſe I ſhall make, will be of exhortation, and that only in two particulars.

1. That you would examine yourſelves, whether you are, and how far you are guilty of the ſin you are here guarded againſt with ſuch a double caution by our Saviour. We ſhould be very cautious of charging others with this ſin, we may wrong them, and injure ourſelves, and draw guilt upon our own ſouls by doing ſo. It is a ſin of an heinous nature, highly provoking to God, very contrary to our chriſtian profeſſion, and various chriſtian obligations, and if it prevails in perſons, and reigns over them, does really unchriſtian them, annuls and makes void their title to a chriſtian character. We ſhould therefore be very tender of charging any with it, and never do ſo without juſt grounds, and a fair call thereto. But, in God's name, let us ſearch out our own guilt this way, and charge ourſelves home with it.

I have ſhown you how very provoking this ſin is in the ſight of God, how many ways he has ſhown his diſpleaſure againſt it, and how it tends to draw down his curſe and judgment upon perſons, families and nations; how evil it is in itſelf, and what evil it expoſes us to, and tends to draw down upon us; and I have endeavoured to ſhow you in a proper manner the nature of this ſin, wherein it conſiſts, and whereby it diſcovers itſelf, and have as to

theſe

Serm. II. theſe matters offered nothing to you, I truſt, but what the word of God will bear me out in.

I beſeech you then conſider (as I have ſhown you all are ſubject to this ſin) whether you are not, and in what degrees you are chargeable with the guilt of it. Have you not been prevailed upon by an unreaſonable, unreſtrain'd deſire of having more of theſe worldly things? Have you not deſired them to exceſs, deſired thus more of theſe things than you had, more than is meet, more than is needful, more than God has allow'd or ſeen fit you ſhould have, and more than would do you good? And have you not found ſuch deſire attended with your diſtruſt of God's providence, and truſting in earthly things, ſo alienating your truſt from God, and placing it upon the idol mammon? Ha'n't it been attended with diſcontent with your own circumſtances, and envying at thoſe of others that were ſuperior to you? with anxious care and thoughtfulneſs for getting and keeping the things of this world, even ſuch as is diſtracting of your mind, and unfitting of you for the ſervice of God, or for the enjoying the proper comforts of a chriſtian or of a man? Ha'n't it been attended with ſuch an earneſt thought and purſuit of theſe worldly things, as even has engroſs'd you and your thoughts, as has fill'd up your time and thoughts, ſo that you could think or ſpeak of nothing, or but very little elſe than this world, and theſe worldly things? Ha'n't it been attended with, and had for its effects fraud, injuſtice, couſenage, oppreſſion, grinding the faces of the poor, lying, prophaning ſacred time, employing it to common uſes and purpoſes, in common affairs to ſerve avaritious deſigns, and withholding from yourſelves and others what was your and their due, and ought accordingly to have been yielded and given?

Labour to know, Sirs, whether and in what degrees you are chargeable with this ſin, charge yourſelves home with it in whatever degree it may have belonged, or is belonging to you. Humble yourſelves deeply before God for it, beg his pardon thro the redeemer's merits, and his grace to help you to overcome it, and to ſeparate yourſelves from it. And,

2. Uſe all proper means to purge yourſelves from it. In dependance upon divine grace, endeavour faithfully and fully to reſolve againſt it; to fix your reſolution againſt it, and in the diligent uſe of all proper means to ſet yourſelves againſt it, to ſeparate and alienate yourſelves from it, to oppoſe it, and to get the victory over it. And in order both to this and the former,

1.) Be

1.) Beware of the deceitful and dangerous nature of this ſin, which is commonly attended with two things that we ſhould moſt dread, and that make mens recovery from it very difficult; they are hardneſs of heart, and blindneſs of mind. As covetouſneſs hardens a man's heart againſt the poor, ſo it does againſt God, againſt himſelf, againſt his family. 'Tis a ſin attended with much hardneſs of heart; 'tis no leſs attended with blindneſs of mind. What every one, all the world can ſee in him that obſerves him, the covetous perſon cannot ſee in himſelf, and is not ready to ſuſpect himſelf of, nor will be eaſily convinced that it is with him; and conſequently he will be hardly recover'd from, or brought to amend.

2.) Remember that for any to be covetous, is to have their *ſpot* not the ſpot of God's children. Such may have covetouſneſs in them, but not prevailing over them, ſo as properly to render them covetous, or to denominate them covetous perſons. *Samuel* diſcharges himſelf from this guilt, when he was ready to lay down his charge: *Behold here I am, witneſs againſt me before the Lord, and before his anointed; Whoſe ox have I taken, or whoſe aſs have I taken, or whom have I defrauded, whom have I oppreſſed, or of whoſe hand have I received any bribe to blind mine eyes therewith?* 1 Sam. xii. 3. So the apoſtle *Paul*, *I have coveted no man's ſilver, or gold, or apparel.* Acts xx. 33. And holy *Job*, you may ſee what various, multiply'd expreſſions he uſes to this purpoſe: *If I have withheld the poor from their deſire, or have cauſed the eyes of the widow to fail, or have eaten my morſel myſelf alone, and the fatherleſs hath not eaten thereof (for from my youth he was brought up with me as with a father, and I have guided her from my mother's womb) if I have ſeen any periſh for want of clothing, or any poor without covering; if his loins have not bleſſed me, and if he were not warmed with the fleece of my ſheep; if I have lift up my hand againſt the fatherleſs, when I ſaw my help in the gate: then let mine arm fall from my ſhoulder-blade, and mine arm be broken from the bone.* Job 31. 16—22. Again, *The ſtranger*, ſays he, *did not lodge in the ſtreet, but I opened my doors to the traveller.* Ver. 32. And he concludes the chapter, and this long diſcourſe thus; *if my land cry againſt me, or that the furrows likewiſe thereof complain; if I have eaten the fruits thereof without money, or have cauſed the owners thereof to loſe their life: let thiſtles grow inſtead of wheat, and cockle inſtead of barley.*

3.) Remember *you were redeemed from a vain converſation*, and from ſuch a vain, unprofitable, injurious, and hurtful converſation eſpecially, as a covetous converſation is, *not with ſilver and gold, but with the precious blood of Chriſt. Foraſmuch as ye know*, ſays the apoſtle, *that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as ſilver and gold, from your vain converſation* 1 Pet. i. 18, 19.

ſation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Chriſt, as of a lamb ſlain without blemiſh, and without ſpot. The price of our redemption, particularly mentioned as to the negative, *not with ſilver and gold,* ſhows that this part of a vain converſation is particularly refer'd to, as what believers were in a peculiar manner redeemed from by the precious blood of Chriſt ſhed on that account; as we are elſewhere told, that our Lord *gave himſelf for us, i. e.* to death, that he might not only *redeem us from all iniquity,* but *purify to himſelf a peculiar people zealous of good works.*

Tit. ii. 14.

4.) Conſider the unſatiableneſs, and ſo the unſeemlineſs of a covetous deſire in thoſe that pretend to be chriſtians. There is no ſatisfying a covetous deſire. Men can never expect to have what they unreaſonably deſire of this world. 'Tis a thirſt that is not to be allay'd, that nothing granted it can ſatisfy. And how unſeemly is it for thoſe that profeſs to be chriſtians, to have taſted better things, to expect the beſt things (taſted ſpiritual things, the ſweetneſs of Chriſt and the promiſes, and expect heaven and eternal glory) to have their hearts ſo affected to this world, and ſo inſatiably thirſting after a worldly good? How well might the apoſtle direct, that *covetouſneſs* ſhould *not be named among chriſtians as becometh ſaints?*

Eph. v. 3.

5.) While you are unreaſonably coveting after theſe worldly things, conſider what you are covering; certainly an evil covetouſneſs to yourſelves, and what may prove ſo to your houſes and families.

It will certainly be to the damage of your own ſouls, to the prejudice of your ſpiritual affection and ſpiritual enjoyment. It may bring great evil upon you, judicial evil, the hiding of God's face, the withdrawing of his Spirit, the leſſening your ſpiritual ſtock and ſpiritual ſtrength, your preſent comforts and your eternal rewards. It may bring evil upon your families. But ſome way or other, if you belong to God, he will convince you of the evil of it, by his rebukes upon you for it, and it's very likely may make you find gall in that, from whence you hoped to reap the greateſt ſweets.

6.) Conſider much, and let your minds much ſteep themſelves in the thoughts of this kind caution, and monition, and gracious command of your redeemer; *Take heed, and beware of covetouſneſs.* How kind is it that he ſhould thus apprize us of the evil of it, and our danger by it, ſet himſelf, and command us to ſet a double guard againſt what we are ſo apt to fall into, and what would prove ſo hurtful to us? Let us hereupon *fear the Lord and his goodneſs,* reverence and bow to the authority of the great

great *lawgiver, who has power to ſave and to deſtroy*, while we admire the kindneſs and grace of our gracious *Monitor* and *Saviour*, and his moſt uſeful and kind monition in order to our ſalvation; for there is no ſalvation for a covetous perſon living and dying ſuch. The apoſtle ſpeaks of it as a known thing, what was and muſt be allow'd and granted amongſt chriſtians, that *covetous* perſons *ſhall not inherit the kingdom of God.* Serm. II

1 Cor vi. 9, 10.

7.) Oppoſe, and immediately and earneſtly ſet yourſelves to do what is contrary to thoſe covetous deſires, affections and practices that have prevailed with you. If you would recover yourſelves from it, haſten your recovery, and early and preſently apply yourſelves to the contrary, to affect and do what is manly, chriſtian, and generous. Show your repentance, your penitent ſenſe of, and humiliation for your former folly, by taking preſent wiſe meaſures, and purſuing them with zeal and heartineſs.

If we would *not fulfil the luſts of the fleſh*, we muſt *walk in the Spirit*; if we would *not be drunk with wine wherein is exceſs*, we ſhould *be filled with the Spirit:* ſo if we would not be covetous (if we would be recovered from former faults and miſmanagement this way, from former and preſent covetouſneſs) let us be generous; let us preſently be ſo, and haſten our eſcape as a bird from the ſnare of the fowler, let us make haſte and not delay to obſerve this order of our Saviour. Let us readily and earneſtly lay hold of every opportunity that offers of doing good, as we may ſeek and court the occaſions of the moſt generous and general beneficence that our circumſtances will admit of, and *whatever our hand findeth to do, do it with our might.*

Gal. v. 16. Eph. v. 18. Eccl. ix. 10.

And when you are converted (as Chriſt ſpeaks to *Peter*, *Strengthen thy brethren*, ſo) do what you can to recover others from this dangerous, fatal ſnare, by which ſo many are taken, and all are endanger'd, and the ſad effects whereof ſo many perſons, families, yea, nations, feel and groan under at this day.

BRITISH MUSEUM

The Bleſſing and Recompence of the Charitable:

A

FUNERAL SERMON

PREACH'D at

TOOTING,

December 31. 1721.

On Occaſion of the

DEATH

OF

Mr. *Thomas Man* Senr.

Who died *December* 17. in the 87th Year of his Age.

LONDON;

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BRITISH MUSEUM

LUKE XIV. 14.

And thou ſhalt be bleſſed, for they cannot recompence thee, for thou ſhalt be recompenced at the reſurrection of the juſt.

OUR bleſſed Lord has not only ſhown his love to us, in the quality of our great high prieſt, dying and ſuffering for us, and interceding at the Father's right hand upon the merits of his ſacrifice offer'd once for all (ſo making reconciliation, obtaining all ſuitable bleſſings and eternal redemption for us) but as our great prophet, inſtructing us in the will of his holy father, enlightening our benighted minds with the knowledge of his divine doctrine, and by his precepts and example leading us to the practice of univerſal righteouſneſs, which is the appointed, and will be the certain way of ſecuring to us the great benefits that come by his death, and the comfort and comfortable enjoyment of the ſame, both in this and in another world.

His zeal, diligence and faithfulneſs in the execution of his prophetical office, taking all occaſions of propounding the divine doctrine of his holy father, confirming it by miracles, reſcuing it from the falſe gloſſes that were put upon it by the corrupt teachers among the *Jews* in his day, and recommending and enforcing it by all proper methods and motives, and his conſtancy herein againſt all oppoſition, were very remarkable in his whole conduct, and particularly in what we have repreſented to us in the chapter of my text. In which we are told, that when he was going to eat bread with one of the chief *Phariſees* on the Sabbath-day, and his enemies watched him, a perſon was in the way that had the dropſy. On this occaſion our Lord enquires of the lawyers and *Phariſees*, whether it was lawful to heal on the Sabbath-day; and they returning him no anſwer, he heals, and ſo diſmiſſes the diſeaſed perſon, and juſtifies his conduct herein to his exceptious adverſaries, by asking them this plain queſtion: *Which of you ſhall have an ox or an aſs fallen into a pit, and will not ſtraitway pull him out on the ſabbath-day?* Ver. 1—5. This was a home queſtion, and thus in a handſome manner our Lord expos'd their hypocriſy, who would pretend that it was a pol-

luting

Serm. III. luting of the ſabbath to do ſo good a thing as heal a ſick man; and brought the truth he would advance with conviction upon the minds of the people (who will ever underſtand good and plain ſenſe better than the jargon of a party) *viz.* that ſubſtantial goodneſs muſt ever take place of ceremonial holineſs, and that no pretence to the latter muſt ever be admitted to exclude the former; that particularly, *The ſabbath was made for man, and not man for the ſabbath:* and the goodneſs of the day muſt be improv'd to our quickening to do good upon it, and not any way to the prejudice of the neceſſary good of any.

When they were about to ſit down, or juſt ſat down, and our Lord obſerv'd how thoſe that were bidden choſe the chief places; he from thence takes occaſion to preach againſt the provoking ſin of pride, and to recommend the neceſſary and becoming grace of humility, without which we cannot have a part in the kingdom of grace here, or of glory hereafter: for as our Lord has elſewhere
Mat xviii. 3. told us, *Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye ſhall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.* And as he concludes his parable ſpoken to this purpoſe here, of perſons invited to a wedding; *For whoſoever exalteth himſelf, ſhall be*
Ver. 7—11. *abaſed; and he that humbleth himſelf, ſhall be exalted.*

And as our Lord could receive no kindneſs from any, but what he would ſurely recompence (God can and will be in debt to no man, and the Redeemer was the greateſt example of gratitude that ever the world had) and as he might and did, it's like, know that he was particularly faulty as to the matter about which he adviſes and admoniſhes him, he directs his ſpeech particularly to him that invited him. Tho, as before and afterwards, he improves this opportunity, and the occaſions it offered for the inſtruction of thoſe about him, as you may ſee to ver. 25. of the chapter; ſo he does in theſe words, which for the reaſons mentioned, he addreſſes to him particularly; *Then*
Ver. 12, &c. *ſaid he alſo to him that bade him, When thou makeſt a dinner or a ſupper, call not thy friends, nor thy bretkren, neither thy kinsfolk, nor thy rich neighbours, leſt they alſo bid thee again, and a recompence be made thee; but when thou makeſt a feaſt, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind, and thou ſhalt be bleſſed, for they cannot recompenſe thee, for thou ſhalt be recompenſed at the reſurrection of the juſt.*

By the advice here given, we cannot reaſonably ſuppoſe,

Firſt, That our Lord's meaning is to condemn all entertainments for the maintaining amity and mutual reſpect among neighbours, friends or relations. It was certainly very

very remote from our Saviour to forbid or condemn the proper offices of hoſpitality, which we owe or ſhould uſe to our friends, relations, acquaintance, or rich neighbours. Humanity, kindneſs, courteouſneſs, and gratitude, are what the Scripture recommends, while what is contrary hereto it forbids, and puts under an odious character. Perſons being void of natural affection, the apoſtle propoſes as a very ill thing, a ſign of the laſt times, and a means of the perilouſneſs of the ſame; and adviſes us to turn away from men of this character, as well as thoſe that were upon other accounts put into the black liſt he there ſets before us. The heathens, by the light of nature, were form'd to a ſenſe of the obligation they were under to mutual kind offices one to another, and eſpecially to hoſpitality; of which therefore they made their ſupreme deity *Jupiter*, the patron and preſident. It would then be more than barbarous to deny that duty to our friends, acquaintance, and relations, that we owe even to ſtrangers, and thoſe of whom we have no knowledge. And as the nature of man prompts and ſtrongly inclines him to ſociety, and mutual ſocial correſpondence and intercourſe, ſo to the begetting and maintaining ſuch friendly ſociety, mutual comeſſation; or eating and drinking one with another, does very much conduce. We have many inſtances in Scripture of feaſts of amity, for the advancing and maintaining good agreement, ſociety, and mutual friendly reſpect among men, and particularly among friends, relations, and acquaintance: thus *Abraham*, the father of the faithful, when his ſon *Iſaac*, the ſeed of the promiſe, was weaned, made a feaſt, *Gen.* xxi. 8. *Iſaac* entertains *Abimelech*, *Phicol*, the captain of his hoſt, and *Ahuzzath* his friend, at a feaſt, in token of a covenant between them. *Joſeph* made a feaſt for his brethren when they came to buy corn in *Egypt*; ſo *Samuel* entertains *Saul* at a feaſt, when he was order'd to anoint him king over *Iſrael*. And as one apoſtle has directed that chriſtians ſhould *uſe hoſpitality one to another without grudging*, ſo another makes it a qualification of a biſhop, that he ſhould be *given to hoſpitality*. And the Evangeliſts give us the account of our Lord's gracing with his own preſence ſeveral friendly entertainments, as in this chapter of my text, ſo *Joh.* ii. the marriage feaſt of *Cana* of *Galilee*, where he was pleaſed to work his firſt miracle, turning the water into wine; and that which *Martha* made, where her brother *Lazarus* alſo was preſent, after he was raiſed from the dead.

Serm. III.

2 Tim. iii. 3.

Compare ver. 5.

Gen. xxvi. 26—30.

Gen. xliii. *towards the end.*

1 Sam. ix.

1 Pet. iv. 9.

1 Tim. iii. 2.

Joh. 12.

Secondly, The true meaning and deſign of this expreſſion may be either,

Serm. III. 1. To caution againſt thoſe things that ought to be avoided in the acts of kindneſs and beneficence we perform towards others. Or,

2. To ſhow how they ought to be performed to God's glory, and our own greateſt advantage.

1. To caution againſt thoſe things that ought to be avoided in the acts of kindneſs and beneficence we perform towards others. And ſo our Lord might, as has been hinted, herein ſhow his gratitude to him who had kindly invited and entertain'd him, by warning him, and his friends he had invited with him, againſt the common errors that prevailed then among the *Jews*, and might perhaps in him and many of them; that is, to do offices of kindneſs and reſpect from a view of ſecular profit and advantage, and hope of larger retribution in the ſame or like kinds, or out of a deſire and ambition of popular applauſe or glory. Theſe are baſe ends, very unfit to govern ſuch actions, for they that ſhow KINDNESS with deſign to draw more upon themſelves, 'tis plain under the pretence of ſo good a thing (ſo neceſſary and beneficial to human ſociety, and the comfort of it) would be making a baſe gain to themſelves; and how baſe and unmanly is this, to endeavour to make a gain of kindneſs? What can really be more uncivil, more ungenteel, more diſhonourable, or diſhoneſt, than by ſome little mean office or offices, that have a ſhow of kindneſs, to pretend to lay others under an obligation to ſuch unſuitable returns, as a man could not have the face directly to ask from them*? Such things cannot be agreeable to thinking men, and muſt be deteſtable in the eyes of the all-knowing God; and thoſe that ſhall by this means ſeek praiſe and glory of men, can expect none from God: the vain glory they ſeek or obtain, is all the reward they ſhall have.

2. To ſhow how acts of kindneſs and beneficence ought to be perform'd to God's glory, and our own greateſt advantage; that is, that we ſhould do ſuch acts of kindneſs with an eye to God's glory, and the greateſt ſervice and advantage of mankind, as acts of faith, believing *God is, and that he is the rewarder of all thoſe that diligently ſeek him*; Heb. xi. 6. and as thoſe that are concerned duly to approve ourſelves to him in our conduct and actions, in the way that may

* Tuta frequenſque via eſt ſub amici fallere nomen:
Tuta frequenſque licet ſit via, crimen habet.
Engliſh'd thus:
'Tis ſafe and common to deceive under a friendly face:
But, ſafe and common as it is, 'tis criminal and baſe.

be-

be moſt likely to recommend ourſelves and our actions to his gracious acceptance, and obtain his gracious acknowledgment, recompence and rewards. And ſo in the caſe before us, our Lord, tho he condemns not feaſts of amity, for the maintaining friendſhip and good neighbourhood, nor does abſolutely forbid feaſting with neighbours, relations, or rich friends, as you have ſeen; yet he prefers to theſe, feaſts of charity. Serm. III.

As under the law (which was a diſpenſation of leſs grace) the poor were, by God himſelf that ordained them, bidden gueſts to their ſolemn feaſts, and were order'd not to be forgot at other times; ſo the Goſpel, as it is a diſpenſation of the greateſt grace, ought proportionably to be anſwered by a more enlarged charity of thoſe that live under it. It ſeems to be our Lord's mind here accordingly, that in none of the entertainments chriſtians made, and the feaſtings they had one with another, the poor ſhould be forgotten, and that the moſt uſual feaſts they made ſhould be feaſts of charity for the entertainment and comfort of the poor. He would have his followers in all their actions, and in thoſe particularly wherein they gave themſelves the greateſt liberty (as men commonly do in their feaſtings and entertainments) to have an eye to another world, and to God's judgment and recompence there as well as here. He would have all his followers live as thoſe that expect, and are in all their actions conſulting and endeavouring to provide for a future judgment and recompence. And therefore he would not have his ſervants in their ordinary entertainments invite the rich, whether kindred, friends or neighbours, that would in return invite them again, and treat them in the like manner, which would be all the recompence they ſhould have; but invite the poor, the lame, and the blind, to partake of their comforts, and the plenty and bleſſings wherewith God had favoured them, but which he had deny'd to theſe poor perſons: and tho theſe could not make returns to them (and for that reaſon becauſe they could not, and that they knowing this, did yet herein approve themſelves to God) he would bleſs them, and recompenſe them at the reſurrection of the juſt. Deut. xiv. 28, 29. Ch. xvi. 11.

Dr. *Hammond*'s comment upon the three verſes I have been explaining, ver. 12. and from that to my text inclusive, is this: "Let not thy entertainments be of thoſe "which can or are likely to entertain thee again, or to "whom thou haſt obligation of affinity, &c. for this is "but a worthleſs way of hoſpitality, in which there "is nothing commendable or thank-worthy. The only

Serm. III. " commendable way, and that which it will be reaſonable " for God to reward, is the entertaining of thoſe that want, " and who are not likely to make thee any return: for " this God will be thy debtor, and pay thee at the day " of judgment, and there can be no ſuch advantage to " thee as that."

Grotius, underſtanding all that are mentioned, the *friends*, the *brethren*, the *kinſfolk*, to be meant (as it's ſaid of the *neighbours*) of *rich* perſons, tells us, that Chriſt does not forbid the mutual offices of friendſhip to the rich, or the mutual ſignification of friendſhip between them, but does much prefer to theſe the works of mercy, which (without hopes of return from men) are perform'd for God's ſake.

And this is no more than wiſe heathens, by the light of nature, have been engaged to recommend, as well as to condemn the contrary. *Cicero* in his *Offices* expreſſes himſelf to this purpoſe: " But in placing a benefit, and in " returning a kindneſs, if other things are equal, this is " chiefly to be obſerved, as every one moſt needs help, " chiefly to help him; the contrary to which, ſays he, is " done by the moſt, for from whom they hope to receive " moſt, altho he want not theſe things, yet they princi- " pally ſerve him *." *Seneca* tells us, that when a man ſhall, in conferring a benefit, reſpect only himſelf and his own profit, *This is not a benefit, but uſury* †.

And *Pliny*, in one of his epiſtles, has theſe remarkable expreſſions: " For I would have him that is truly libe- " ral give to his country, his neighbours, his kinsfolks, " his friends, but I mean to his poor friends, not as thoſe " who chiefly give to ſuch as are moſt able to give. My " opinion of ſuch is, that with gifts, beſmear'd with bird- " lime and beſet with hooks, they do not ſo much draw " our their own, as ſeize and ſnatch away the goods of " others. The like may be ſaid of them, who what they " give to one, take away from another, and ſeek the re- " putation of liberality by covetouſneſs **."

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* Sed in collocando beneficio, & in referenda gratia, ſi cætera paria ſint, hoc maxime officii eſt, ut quiſque maxime opis indigeat, ita ei potiſſimum opitulari; quod contra fit a plerisque, quo enim plurimum ſperant, etiam ſi ille his non eget, tamen ei potiſſimum inſerviunt, *Cic. de Offic. Lib.* 1.

† Iſtud non eſt beneficium, ſed fœnus, *Sen. de Benef. Lib.* 4 *Cap.* 3.

** Volo enim eum qui ſit vere liberalis, tribuere patriæ, proximis affinibus, amicis, ſed amicis dico pauperibus, non ut illi qui iis potiſſimum donant, qui donare maxime poſſunt. Hos ego viſcatis hamatisque muneribus non ſua promere puto, ſed aliena corripere. Sunt ingenio ſimili, qui quod huic donant, auferunt illi, famamque liberalitatis avaritia petunt, *Plin. Epiſt. Lib.* 9. *Ep.* 30.

Thus

Thus by the light of nature and Scripture (if we will be guided by either) we are directed to make those the objects of our kindness, that most need it; as in the instance our Saviour here proposes, so in other things proportionably we are to do good to those that cannot return our kindness (as they are least able to do, that most need it) and so doing we may apply our Saviour's words, *And thou shalt be blessed, for they cannot recompense thee, for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.* Serm. III.

In which we have,

I. The blessedness of those signify'd, that observe our Lord's order in relation to charity to the poor; *And thou shalt be blessed.*

II. The confirming reasons or assuring arguments of the same, express'd in the following words; *For they cannot recompense thee, for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.*

I. We have here the blessedness of those signify'd, that observe our Lord's order in relation to charity to the poor; *And thou shalt be blessed.* Those that will not forget the poor, when they remember, and most remember themselves, that will make them partakers of their good things, that will chuse to show their respects to them rather than to the rich, that will own and countenance them, feed and foster them, refresh their bowels, cherish and cheer them; *they shall be blessed.*

The Scripture is frequent in declaring the blessedness of those that show their suitable regards to the poor, in asserting the general blessedness of such persons, and assigning those particular blessings to them, which mankind are apt most sensibly to be affected by, and most earnestly to desire.

Here their general blessedness is asserted by our Lord in the strongest terms, *And thou shalt be blessed.* He that was *sent* of God to *bless* us, has pronounced his blessing upon such. He who *says, and it comes to pass*, who proposes, and no man can disannul; he *that is the Amen, the faithful and true witness*, who cannot give a false testimony, whose word is more stable than the foundations of heaven and earth (which shall sooner pass away, than the least iota or tittle of what he has said shall fail) he that has all power in heaven and earth, and all faithfulness to make good his promises; that has power to bless, and make his blessing effectual and eternal, so as those whom he blesses shall be blessed for ever; he has said that such shall be blessed. Acts iii.

So

Serm. III. So ſays the Pſalmiſt, *Bleſſed is he that conſidereth the poor, the Lord ſhall deliver him in time of trouble; the Lord will preſerve him, and keep him alive, and he ſhall be bleſſed upon the earth, and thou wilt not deliver him into the will of his enemies: the Lord will ſtrengthen him upon the bed of languiſhing, thou wilt make all his bed in his ſickneſs.* Theſe are ſuch bleſſings as nearly affect mankind, and ſuch as they are apt ſtrongly to deſire. We naturally and earneſtly deſire to have our lives preſerved and protracted, to have deliverance in time of trouble, to have bleſſings flowing in upon us on earth, upon our perſons and families: we count it an exceeding valuable and very deſirable mercy, not to be delivered to the will of our enemies, whether ſpiritual or temporal, ſo to be ſtrengthened upon a bed of languiſhing, and to have our bed made eaſy in ſickneſs. Every one would deſire ſuch bleſſings as theſe, and they, you ſee here, are promis'd bleſſings to thoſe that conſider the poor. To the merciful, God will ſhow himſelf thus merciful, and they ſhall find the faithfulneſs of the promiſe, and of him that made it, in the natural and temporal good that the promiſe contains, as far as it ſhall be for God's glory, and for their own good, and be ſure in the ſpiritual and eternal bleſſings that are contained therein. So when in that cxiith *Pſalm*, the good and upright man is deſcribed by that particular good quality of his being good to the poor, favourable, merciful, and helpful to ſuch as are in diſtreſs, as ver. 4, &c. *Unto the upright there ariſeth light in the darkneſs, he is gracious, and full of compaſſion, and righteous; a good man ſhoweth favour, and lendeth, he will guide his affairs with diſcretion; ſurely he ſhall not be moved for ever: the righteous ſhall be in everlaſting remembrance, he ſhall not be afraid of evil tidings, his heart is fixed truſting in the Lord, his heart is eſtabliſhed, he ſhall not be afraid until he ſee his deſire upon his enemies. He hath diſperſed, he hath given to the poor, his righteouſneſs endureth for ever, his horn ſhall be exalted with honour.* Light ſhall ariſe to ſuch in darkneſs, they ſhall have ſuitable ſupport and comfort in the moſt cloudy circumſtances they can be in, in this world: ſuch ſhall guide their affairs with diſcretion, they ſhall find a gracious God ready to give them counſel and conduct, while they duly ſeek it, for the guiding and governing all their affairs, even thoſe that are moſt intricate, and ſhall be ſo ſaved from thoſe difficulties, perplexities and anxieties that commonly attend other men, and thoſe uncomfortable and corroding reflections they have frequently, thro the ill ſucceſs that follow upon their miſmanagement. Such ſhall not be moved for ever, from their ſtay and truſt in God, their hope

Pſal. xli. 1, 2, 3.

hope in him, and their hold of him, they ſhall be in ever- Serm. III.
laſting remembrance with God, and their memory ſhall be perpetuated, and ſhall be precious and fragrant with good men. They ſhall not be afraid inordinately of evil tidings, ſo as to have the fear of them ſinking and overcoming of them, removing them from their hope in God, or running them upon deſperate methods; but a ſtedfaſt truſt in god ſhall fix their hearts, and govern their actions and behaviour in ſuch circumſtances. When evil may threaten, the heart of ſuch ſhall be eſtabliſhed; they ſhall not be afraid till they ſee their deſire upon their enemies, much leſs afterward. But what we read, *Until he ſee his deſire upon his enemies*, is otherwiſe rendred, *Till he ſee upon his diſtreſſes*; and ſo the meaning may be, till he ſee God's work or reward hereupon; till he ſee, as *Job* did, and as good and charitable perſons ſhall, *The end of the Lord, that* Jam. v. 11. *the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercies.* The *Chaldee* has it, *Till he ſee redemption in diſtreſs* *. The righteouſneſs of ſuch endureth for ever, their horn ſhall be exalted with honour; they ſhall be proſperous and happy here, but infinitely more ſo, and to eternity in another world.

Thus of the firſt thing, the bleſſedneſs of thoſe ſignified, that obſerve our Lord's order in relation to charity to the poor. As their bleſſedneſs is aſſerted and aſſured in the general by him, who has power to bleſs; ſo they have ſuch particular bleſſings aſſign'd to them in Scripture, as mankind are apt moſt ſenſibly to be affected with, and moſt earneſtly to deſire: *And thou ſhalt be bleſſed.*

II. We have farther conſiderable, the confirming reaſons and aſſuring arguments of what is here ſignified. For,

1. They *cannot recompenſe thee.*

2. *Thou ſhalt be recompenſed at the reſurrection of the juſt*, or *it ſhall be recompenſed to thee*; recompenſe ſhall be made to thee *at* or *in* the reſurrection of the juſt.

1. The confirming reaſon and aſſuring argument of the bleſſedneſs of theſe that ſhow kindneſs to the poor, is, that theſe poor cannot recompenſe them; ſuch kindneſs to them is a part of righteouſneſs, as it's ſtyled in the Pſalm I have now referred you to: and as ſuch it muſt have its reward or recompence aſſign'd them. Now this recompenſe our Lord tells us cannot be made by the poor: for they cannot recompenſe thee. How is this to be underſtood? To this I anſwer,

* Vid. *Ainſworth* in loc.

1.) Ne-

Serm. III. 1.) Negatively. And,
2.) Poſitively.

1.) Negatively; and ſo we are *not* to underſtand it as if the poor *could make no manner of recompenſe*, or make any ſuch recompenſe as is worthy of conſideration or regard; for this it's poſſible they may do in kinds and inſtances that are very worthy of conſideration, and may much exceed in their nature, worth and value, all the kindneſs you do or can beſtow upon them. For,

(1. They may *pray for you.* The poor, the apoſtle tells us, receive the Goſpel; *Hath not God choſen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promiſed to them that love him?* Many of the poor of this world, and they more commonly than the rich, are choſen of God to faith, and rich increaſes therein, and to the heirſhip of the eternal kingdom; and if they have faith, they may pray in faith, and what good may they not do you by their prayers for you, who the better they are, the leſs they will dare to neglect, and the more earneſtly they will be engaged to put up to God for their friends and benefactors? *The effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man avail th much.* Surely here your kindneſs may be vaſtly outdone.

Jam. ii. 5.

Jam. v. 16.

(2. They may *bleſs you*, and do that alſo in faith. They may pronounce in faith thoſe bleſſings upon you, that God has in his Word aſſign'd to thoſe that are charitable, and ſhow kindneſs to their needy brethren; and what God has pronounced, and directs and helps them to pronounce after him, he will certainly make good: he will perform with his hand what he hath ſpoken with his mouth, and may do it the ſooner upon this account. As the curſe cauſeleſs will never come, the bleſſing may upon ſuch occaſion come the ſooner. It may be, ſome of thoſe you ſhow kindneſs to, may be ſuch as to whom it belongs by office and by authority they have received from God to bleſs in his name: but whether it be ſo or otherwiſe, the poor's bleſſing is many times a much greater benefit than any they have beſtow'd upon them by thoſe, to whom they are moſt obliged. *Job* both valued and proved this: *When the ear heard me, then it bleſſed me; and when the eye ſaw me, it gave witneſs to me, becauſe I delivered the poor that cried, the fatherleſs, and him that had none to help him: the bleſſing of him that was ready to perſh came upon me, and I cauſed the widow's heart to ſing for joy.*

Job xxix. 11, &c.

(3. They may otherwiſe ſhow themſelves grateful, and make very valuable returns, by *ſpiritual and temporal*

good

good offices and ſervices to you and yours. A poor man may be a wiſe man, and by his wiſdom ſave a city, tho for his poverty no man regard him. Such a one may ſpeak words to you or yours by which you may be ſaved, be uſeful to convert you or them from the error of thoſe ways that would prove deſtructive, and ſo to *ſave from death, and hide a multitude of ſins.* The apoſtles were as *poor, yet making many rich.* Their friendſhip in ſpiritual offices may be very friendly indeed to you and yours, and it may ſo happen, that in temporal reſpects their friendſhip, good will, good word, intereſt and influence, may do very good ſervice in many reſpects to you and them. But, Serm. III. Eccl. ix. 15. Jam. v. 19, 20. 2 Cor. vi. 10.

2.) Poſitively; and ſo when it is ſaid of the poor, *They cannot recompenſe thee*, we may underſtand it either,

(1. That from *many* of them *no recompence is to be expected.* There are many of the poor, to whom we may and muſt ſhow kindneſs (for we may not harden ourſelves againſt our own fleſh) many of theſe, I ſay, are ignorant, ſtupid, hard-hearted, vitious and vile; they have no good principle in them, no ſenſe of gratitude, no inclination to make returns for any kindneſs ſhown them, or have no capacity hereof, as is the caſe of infants, fools and mad perſons. From many of thoſe, to whom we are obliged by our Lord's order to ſhow kindneſs, no recompence is to be expected.

(2. Thoſe that are otherwiſe affected, and better diſpoſed to make returns for favours ſhown them, yet *cannot recompenſe you in like kinds* or inſtances, to thoſe in which you have ſhown them kindneſs. If you invite them to your houſes, and entertain them there, if you cloath them, or give them money, they cannot in like kinds recompenſe you, or make returns to your kindneſs ſhown them. This is the buſineſs and way of the rich, as you find in the context, and what the poor cannot reach to. And to be ſure, in the third place,

(3. They *cannot make the proper and full recompence* that God has deſign'd ſhall be made to ſuch kindneſs. So great a value does the great God ſet upon kindneſs and charity to the poor, that he is pleaſed to make himſelf a debtor for it, and to promiſe to repay it: *He that hath pity on the poor, lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given him, will he pay him again.* And we may aſſure ourſelves, that where God hath promiſed to recompenſe, he will recompenſe like himſelf; and they are great and glorious rewards he will in this and in another world aſſign and give Prov. xvii. 19.

Serm. III. to thoſe that are thus charitable. The poor cannot make full recompenſe, but God will. And thus we are led to the conſideration of the ſecond head,

II. The confirming reaſon or aſſuring argument of what is here ſaid, *For thou ſhalt be recompenſed at the reſurrection of the juſt*; ἀνταποδοθήσεται γὰρ σοι ἐν τῇ ἀναστάσει τῶν δικαίων. Here,

1. It is aſſured that *there ſhall be a recompence made.* You have here the Word of God given, that the recompence of ſuch ſhall not fail, they ſhall not fail of a retribution from God; *He is faithful that hath promiſed:* and as you have heard that God will repay what is lent to him, by being given to the poor, and as our Lord has aſſur'd, that he
Mat. x. 42. *that ſhall give a cup of cold water only to a diſciple, in the name of a diſciple, ſhall not loſe his reward*; this will ſtill remain a truth, and he remaineth faithful that will perform it: ſo that ſuch ſhall be ſure of a recompence.

2. Their recompence ſhall be made *at the reſurrection of the juſt.* This may ſignify,

1.) The advantage they ſhall have in the reſurrection itſelf; for we are told, 1 *Theſſ.* iv. 16. that *the dead in Chriſt ſhall riſe firſt:* good and pious perſons all the world over ſhall be firſt raiſed and made glad with the preſence of their coming Lord, to ſee him in his glory, to ſee their own glory in him, and receive the pledge of their perfect and entire happineſs from and with him. This ſeems favour'd by the expreſſion uſed here, ἐν τῇ ἀναστάσει, which may be properly render'd *in the reſurrection:* and this we may look upon as part of their recompence. But,

2.) The meaning is chiefly, their recompence ſhall be made them *upon the reſurrection of the juſt.* When they ſhall, at the great tribunal, be acquitted, juſtified and declared righteous by Chriſt; when they ſhall be accordingly acknowledged of him, bleſſed by him, adjudged to eternal life, and admitted into his everlaſting kingdom; when their charity and kindneſs to the poor will,

(1. Show them to be righteous perſons, and be made appear as *a part of their righteouſneſs*; that is, of their perſonal and inherent righteouſneſs. This is called righteouſneſs in Scripture, as I have ſhown, and the apoſtle at once ſhows us that it is ſo, and how we are to underſtand its being ſo, 2 *Cor.* ix. 9, 10. *As it is written, He hath diſperſed abroad, he hath given to the poor, his righteouſneſs endureth for ever.* (It is a quotation from *Pſalm* cxii.) *Now he that miniſtreth ſeed to the ſower, both miniſter bread for your food, and multiply your ſeed ſown, and encreaſe the fruits of your righteouſneſs.* 'Tis here, you ſee, called chriſtian's righteouſneſs,

teouſneſs, and tho it be not their imputed righteouſneſs, their juſtifying righteouſneſs, which is only the righteouſneſs of Chriſt apprehended by faith; yet it is, as the apoſtle here terms it, the fruit of that, and the neceſſary reſult of a true faith, that will have its works attending it, and proceeding from it, as *Jam.* ii. 14, &c. *What doth it profit, my brethren, tho a man ſay he hath faith, and hath not works? Can faith ſave him? If a brother or ſiſter be naked, and deſtitute of daily food, and one of you ſay to them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled, notwithſtanding ye give them not thoſe things that are needful to the body, what doth it profit? Even ſo faith, if it have not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may ſay, Thou haſt faith, and I have works; ſhow me thy faith without thy works, and I will ſhow thee my faith by my works.* Serm. III.

(2. It will be a part of their *title to the recompence* that will then be aſſign'd. 'Tis our neceſſary qualification for bleſſedneſs, and that to which it will be immediately aſſign'd by the great judge of all. When our Lord will pronounce the ſentence, *Come ye bleſſed of my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world*; he will add, *For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat; thirſty, and ye gave me drink; I was a ſtranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me; I was ſick, and ye viſited me; I was in priſon, and ye came unto me.* And upon their enquiry, *When ſaw we thee an hungred, and fed thee; or thirſty, and gave thee drink? When ſaw we thee a ſtranger, and took thee in; or naked, and clothed thee? Or when ſaw we thee ſick, or in priſon, and came unto thee?* it's ſaid, *The king ſhall anſwer and ſay unto them, Inaſmuch as ye have done it to one of the leaſt of theſe my brethren, ye have done it unto me.* Mat. xxv. 34, 35, 36. Ver. 37, 38, 39. Ver. 40.

By way of uſe and improvement of what has been ſaid,

1. We may hence conclude, that *there will be a reſurrection.* Our Lord has here ſhown us, that recompence ſhall be made to thoſe that ſhow kindneſs to the poor at the reſurrection of the juſt; and therefore we may conclude that ſuch a thing will be: the expreſſion ſtrongly implies that there will be a reſurrection. This the apoſtle ſtiles the hope of *Iſrael*, *For the hope of* Iſrael *I am bound with this chain*; and declares it as the matter of his own *hope toward God, that there ſhall be a reſurrection of the dead, both of the juſt and of the unjuſt.* *Job* comforts himſelf with the ſame hope under his great affliction, and with the ſure knowledge he had of the truth and certainty of the thing he Act. xxviii. 20. Ch. xxiv. 15.

Serm. III. hoped for. *For I know*, ſays he, *that my redeemer liveth, and that he ſhall ſtand at the latter day upon the earth; and tho after*
Job xix. 25, 26, 27. *my ſkin, worms deſtroy this body, yet in my fleſh ſhall I ſee God, whom I ſhall ſee for myſelf, and mine eyes ſhall behold, and not another: tho my reins be conſumed within me.* The Scripture is frequent in aſſerting it, and affords us many arguments to aſſure us of it. Our Saviour proves it to the *Sadducees* from the *covenant of God* made with believers, who was,
Luke xx. 37. according to that, *the God of* Abraham, *the God of* Iſaac, *and the God of* Jacob; and was *not the God of the dead, but of the living:* which ſhows that the ſouls of theſe perſons were now living and happy with God, and (as God's covenant was made with their whole perſons) that their bodies would be alſo raiſed in due time. So it is argued
2 Cor. iv. 14. from the *reſurrection of our Lord, knowing that he that raiſed up the Lord Jeſus, ſhall raiſe us up alſo by Jeſus, and ſhall preſent us with you:*
1 Theſſ. iv. 14. *So if we believe that Jeſus died and roſe again, even ſo them alſo that ſleep in Jeſus, ſhall God bring with him.* So *Rom.* viii. 11. 1 *Cor.* xv. There's an indiſſoluble connection between the reſurrection of Chriſt and believers; a connection as to merit and purchaſe: Chriſt has purchaſed every part of his own, he has paid for, and merited their happineſs, their entire and compleat happineſs,
Joh. vi. 39. in every part of them, and he will *loſe nothing of all that the father hath given him, but will raiſe it up at the laſt day.* And ſo as to efficacy, there is a like indiſſoluble connection betwixt theſe; there is a mutual relation and near communion betwixt Chriſt and believers. He has riſen as their common head, and becauſe he lives, they ſhall live alſo. Believers, in their whole perſons, are ſaid to be
Eph. i. 23. Chriſt's fulneſs; and if any part of them ſhould be loſt, Chriſt (as we may ſpeak with reverence) would not be
1 Cor. xii. 12. compleat. As the Church is called Chriſt, as it conſiſts of head and members; ſo one part of Chriſt would be loſt.

I might offer you other Scripture arguments, and call in *reaſon* to the proof of this great article of our faith, which will aſſure us, that the Scriptures are the Word of God; that to God nothing is impoſſible; that whatever difficulties may attend the reſurrection, they are nothing but what the wiſdom and power of God can eaſily account for, and ſurmount; and that it's ſuitable in itſelf that God ſhould be the rewarder of the whole man, and that thoſe ſubjects, thoſe ſouls and bodies that have join'd together in ſin and wickedneſs againſt him, or in labour and travail in his work, or pain and ſuffering for his ſake, ſhould be jointly rewarded or puniſhed. Reaſon will help

help us to credit it, and to account for its difficulties by what we ſee and obſerve: as ſleep is the image of death, and waking an emblem of the reſurrection; every day is a ſort of reſurrection from the night; the ſpring is a reſurrection from the death the winter brought upon the plants, flowers and trees; the blade and ears of corn in the harveſt, are a reſurrection of the grain that was buried in the ground: the world itſelf, and all the creatures in it, reaſon will tell us, may be ſufficient to remove all our difficulties here; for it cannot be more difficult to raiſe the dead, than to frame, out of nothing, ſuch a world. Serm. III.

2. Charity and kindneſs to the poor is one *bleſſed means of ſecuring to ourſelves an happy reſurrection.* Our Lord has here poſitively declared, that thoſe that are exerciſed in ſuitable acts of this nature, ſhall be *recompenſed in the reſurrection of the juſt.* The main recompence that ſhall be made to them, ſhall be in and upon the reſurrection; and therefore they ſhall then find their happineſs, that will by this means be ſecured. So when, in the concluſion of the parable of the unjuſt ſteward, he bids us, *Make to yourſelves friends of the mammon of unrighteouſneſs, that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlaſting habitations*; he plainly ſignifies, that the right uſe of worldly wealth will contribute to the ſalvation of thoſe that ſo improve it: when this world fails them (tho they cannot to whom they extended their charity) the God by whoſe order, at whoſe inſtance, and for whoſe glory they did it, ſhall receive them into everlaſting habitations. Luk. xvi. 9.

3. They ſhall certainly find their account in the reſurrection of the juſt, who are the *faithful adviſers and zealous promoters of charity.* Thoſe who have not wherewith to be charitable, and ſhow kindneſs to the poor themſelves, at leaſt to any conſiderable degree; yet may do much by their prudent and good advice to promote charity in others. And tho hereupon they may be ill thought of by ſome, and may fare worſe in this world; yet is this truly a cauſe worth ſuffering for, and the good account hereof will be found in the reſurrection of the juſt, when they ſhall have their part in the reward of the good others did at their inſtance, and ſhall receive not according to their ſucceſs, whereof they many times fail; but according to their zealous, regular deſires and endeavours to do good this way. And if this be ſo, it muſt follow, in the fourth and laſt place,

4. That woe will be to the *refuſers and obſtructers of charity.* Thoſe that laid up and hid their Lord's talent in a napkin,

Serm. III. kin, that would not do good themſelves, and hinder'd others in the good they were diſpoſed and intended to do, ſurely can have no part in the reſurrection of the juſt, nor ſhall they *ſtand in the congregation of* ſuch; but ſhall, without ſerious, deep and ſound repentance, have a hot ſtanding at the great tribunal. They *ſhall have judgment without mercy, that ſhewed no mercy, when mercy ſhall rejoice againſt judgment*, to thoſe that ſhewed mercy.

Jam. ii. 13.

I have thus finiſh'd my ſubject. I know it will be expected I ſhould ſay ſomewhat concerning our dear friend and brother deceaſed, whoſe death and funeral has given occaſion to my ſpeaking to you from theſe words.

Mr. THOMAS MAN *ſenior*, was a perſon whom nature recommended; his body being a curious piece of its workmanſhip, comely and well proportioned; his countenance grave, but free and open, kind and inviting, without ſternneſs or ſeverity: a true index of his ſoul and manner of life. His converſation was very inoffenſive, humble and obliging, free and open, kind and loving, without guile or gall, without rancour or cenſoriouſneſs, pious and edifying. Diſcourſe of good things was what he was much pleaſed with, and always ready to encourage. As he had a long continued exerciſe by a troubleſome diſtemper, that went thro a great part of his life, he was more chearful than could be expected, and ordinarily ſoon raiſed from the contrary. Tho he was comfortable in his relations that were placed about him, and had much pleaſure in their ſociety, he ſpent much of his time alone in the Bible, and a few good books; and when he could not read them himſelf, had them read to him by others. Prayer he much valued and deſired, and never, as I remember, in all my long converſation with him, refuſed when it was offered him; and, I doubt not, was much exerciſed in ſecret prayer. He was conſtant and early in attending the publick worſhip of God twice a day each Sabbath, as well as at other times, till above fours years ſince he was diſabled from walking to the Aſſembly. He was a great ſupporter of the worſhip of God here, and a great friend to miniſters, and thoſe that were looking toward the miniſtry; to whom, beſides what he did in a conſtant courſe, and for divers late years more eſpecially, which was conſiderable, I have known him to give an hundred pounds at once. His charitable donation to the poor of this pariſh, was the greateſt they ever had; and as it had this to recommend it, that it was given many years before his death, ſo it is firmly ſettled upon them to perpetuity. Beſides all

all this, he was ready and willing to give conſiderable teſtimonies of his charitable liberality in a common courſe, and upon proper occaſions offered. The poor have loſt in him a great patron and benefactor: I pray God the loſs may be made up. Serm. III.

He reap'd the bleſſing here of him that conſidereth the poor, for the Lord delivered him often in time of trouble, and preſerved him in an hour of temptation; kept him alive to a great old age: he bleſſed him upon the earth, and did not deliver him into the will of his enemies; the Lord ſtrengthened him upon the bed of languiſhing, and made all his bed in his ſickneſs. He made his ſick-bed and his death-bed eaſy. He ſeem'd to be eaſier there than for a conſiderable time before, except when things came to the laſt extremity, and then he ſeem'd not to endure much pain, and was eaſy in his mind all the while, as far as I could perceive; he profeſs'd, upon my enquiry, a quieting hope he had in the mercy of God thro Chriſt, and his hoped ſincere conſent to the Goſpel covenant, or covenant of grace, tho he lamented his imperfections and ſhort-comings, I ſuppoſe, as to what that conſent engaged him to; he rehearſed divers promiſes of God's grace in Chriſt to poor ſinners, and, as far as I could perceive, was not under one aſſault from ſatan all the time, and went off at laſt in a manner inſenſibly, tho he was ſenſible to the laſt; and we hope he is now paſt pain, and ſorrow, and complaint, and all uneaſineſs, reaping the eternal rewards of righteouſneſs and mercy to the poor: *Iſa.* lvii. 1, 2. *The righteous periſheth, and no man layeth it to heart; and merciful men are taken away, none conſidering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come. He ſhall enter into peace, they ſhall reſt in their beds* (this ſhall be the portion of) *each one walking in his uprightneſs.* O may this town, this neighbourhood, this ſociety eſpecially, lay to heart the removal of two ſuch perſons from among us in four months, as Mr. MAN and Mr. COLLYER! Pſal. xli. 1, 2, 3.

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